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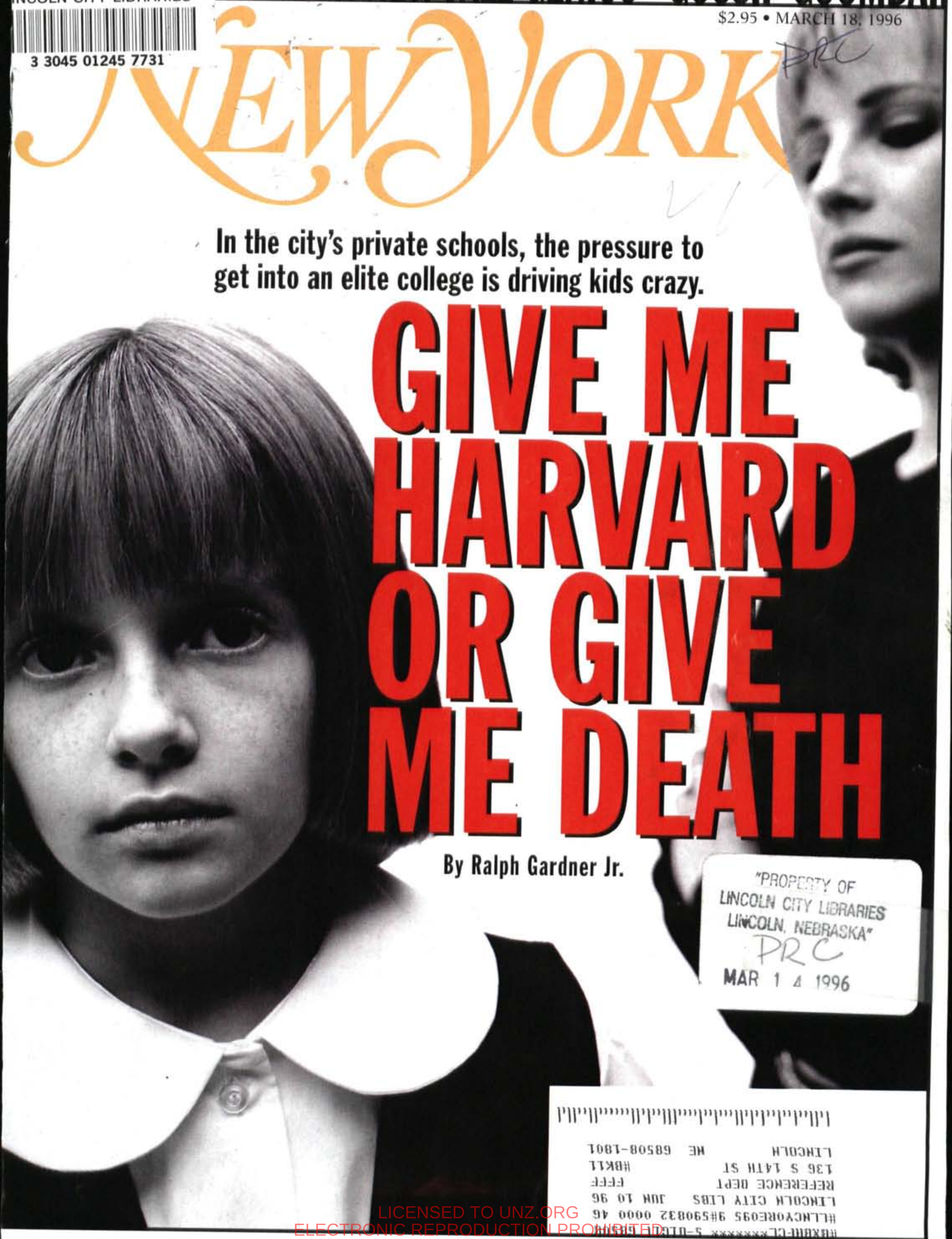

In the city's private schools, the pressure to get into an elite college is driving kids crazy.

GIVE ME HARVARD OR GIVE ME DEATH

By Ralph Gardner Jr.

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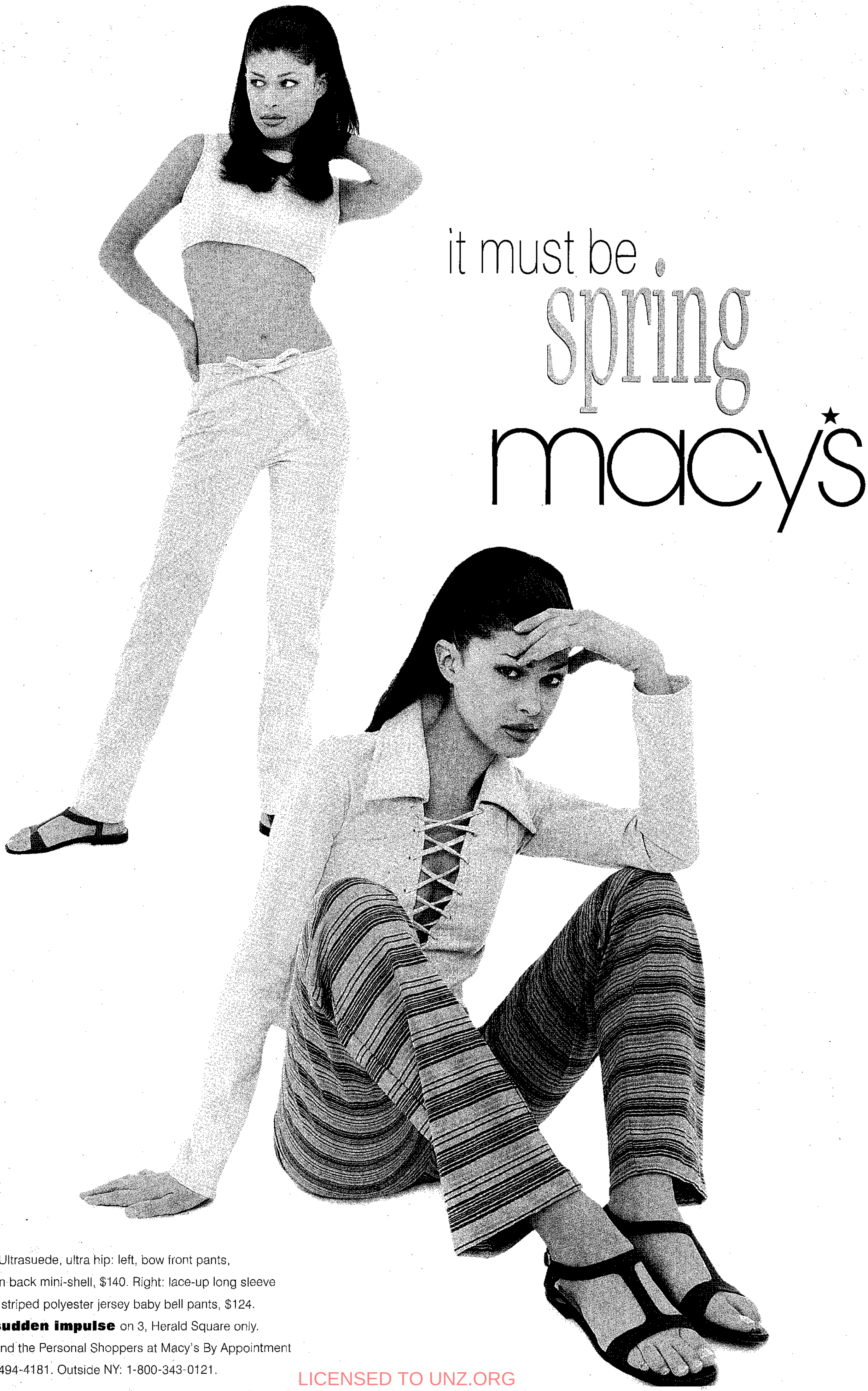

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> Then one day it comes, and is that it?"
>
> Alex Conrad, page 30

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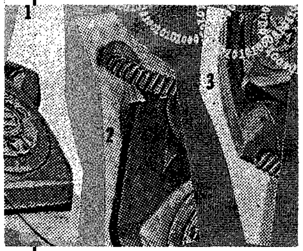
By David Bennahum



Amid the controversy over AT&T's announcement of its plan to fire 40,000 employees as it splits into three separate companies, a further-reaching question has never been answered: Does AT&T know what it's doing? An analysis of internal documents suggests that Ma Bell's grand plan for the techno-future may be fundamentally flawed.

28 Queen Cassandra

By Chris Norris

Her story has classic lines: Girl from deep South with great voice comes to New York, gets raves on the club circuit, becomes a star. But there are differences: What jazz singer has claimed Joni Mitchell as an influence, or covered a Monkees tune? An interview with jazz's new first lady.

30 Give Me Harvard Or Give Me Death

By Ralph Gardner Jr.

These days, getting your kid into the Ivy League entails not only elite private pre-schools and grade schools and high schools but tutors, "homework helpers," admissions consultants, and constant pressure from high-achieving parents to excel at any cost. A tour of the twelve anxiety-laden circles of elite-school hell. Plus: Zev Borow on "learning disabled" abuses and Billy Tashman on the public schools' gutted gifted programs.

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By Nancy Jo Sales

In his *Daily News* "Hot Copy" and "Downtown" columns, and in regular appearances on the E! channel, A. J. Benza chronicles a Runyonesque cityscape of unsavory characters and night-crawling celebrities. His greatest discovery so far is a strange combination of the two: A. J. Benza.

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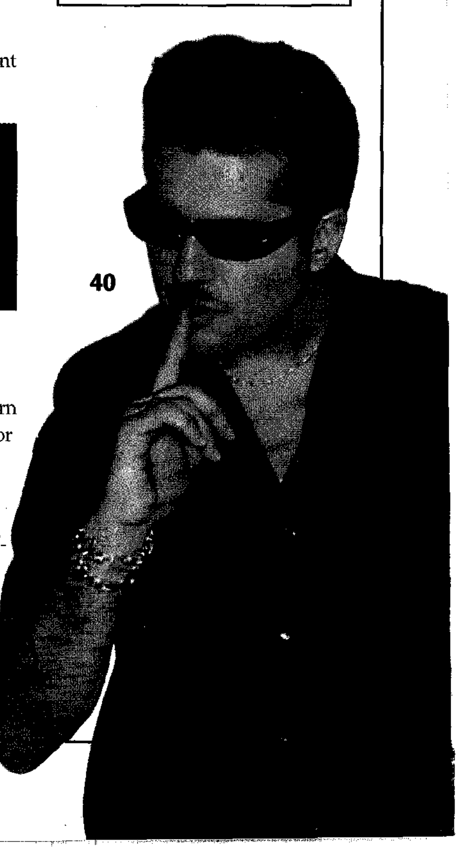
Chat with MIT economist Lester Thurow about tectonic shifts in the economy and the job market on 3/13 at 9 P.M. in the New York Forum. On CompuServe *go* NYTALK.



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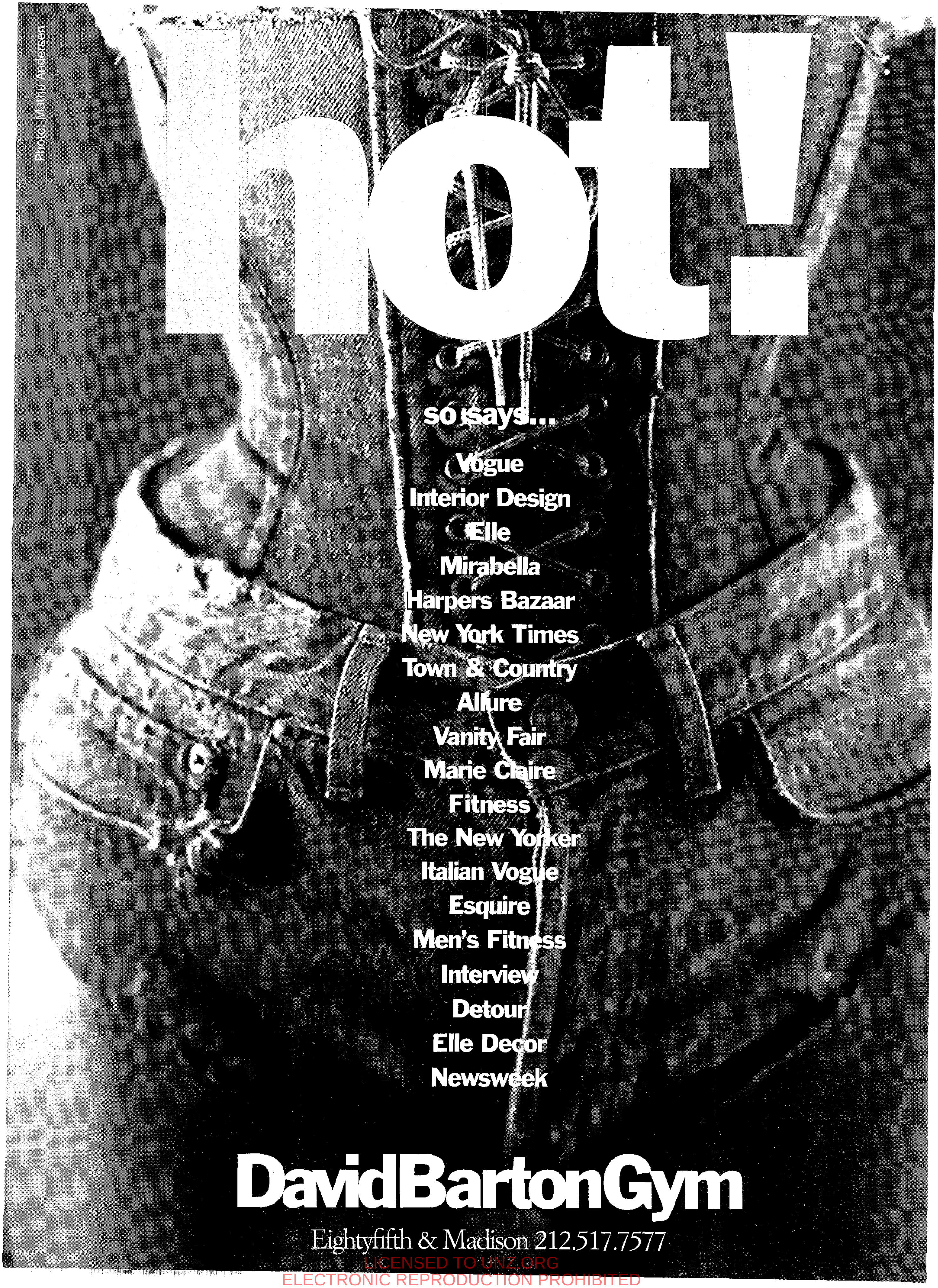

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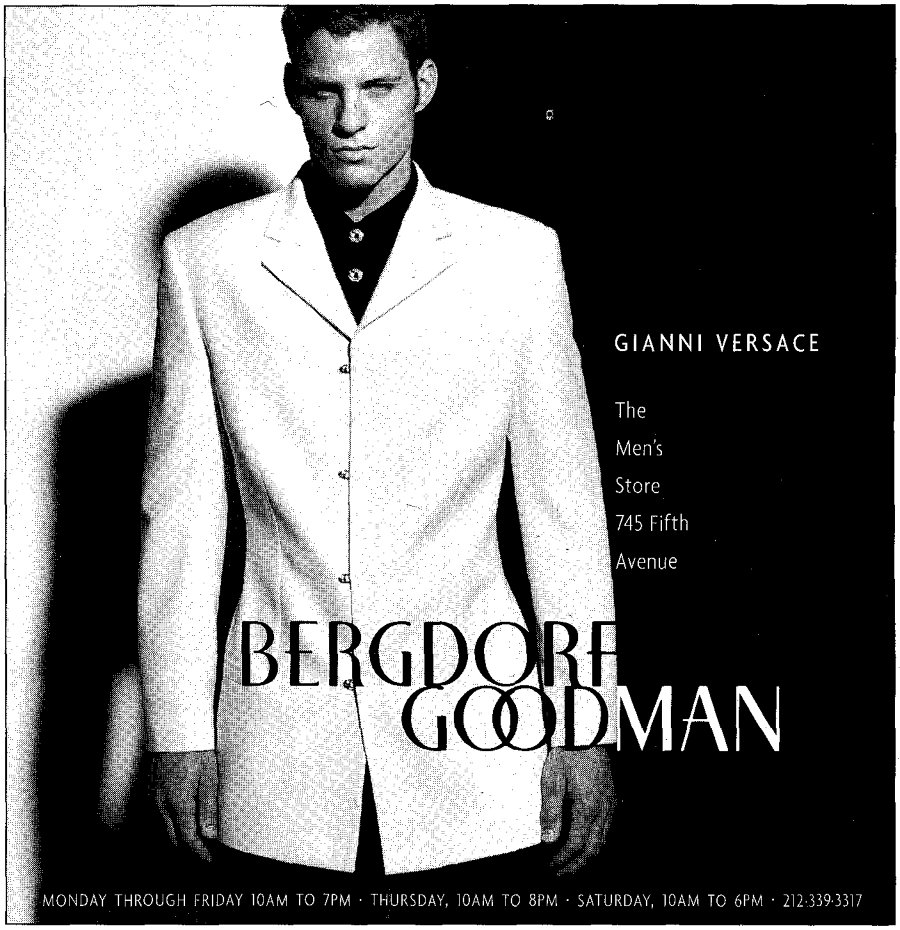
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Student Teachers

Praise for the schoolchildren's poll and New York City's teachers; adulation for the I-man; the ADL on "Being Jewish."

New York's REVEALING PENN + Schoen poll ["Kids Say the Darnedest Things," February 26] proves what the UFT has always maintained: If you want to find out what's really going on in our schools, don't read the newspapers; ask the kids. That 36 percent of more than 1 million students say there aren't always enough seats and 26 percent say their books are outdated says a lot about this city's priorities. That 88 percent of our students classify their teachers as either "good" or "excellent" says a lot about this city's teachers.

Sandra Feldman
President, United Federation of Teachers
MANHATTAN

IT'S ABOUT TIME SOMEONE ASKED THE STUdents about public schools. As a proud 1989 graduate of Brooklyn Technical High School—and a third-year medical student—I can firmly state that the four years I spent in high school were some of the best of my life, better than the four years of private college and private medical school. At Tech I worked with some fine instructors, who made learning fun.

The main determinants of how good the school is are students. Most Technites are hardworking, and a good percentage come from what would be labeled "underprivileged neighborhoods and families." More than 90 percent of the class of 1989 went on to higher education—and the student body is well over 4,000. Surely, the competition for limited spots at the specialized high schools in New York results in the best students' going there.

Andrew Beyzman
BROOKLYN

Power Play

I'VE BEEN AN AVID LISTENER TO DON IMUS'S show since the early seventies, when he was indeed asking, "Are you naked?" Most readers may remember that morning-drive time was b-o-r-i-n-g in those days. Not Imus! He was quick-witted, original, acerbic, funny, and very unconcerned about his image. Still is, only sober and in love with his wife, Deirdre.

Letters may be edited for space and clarity. They should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, New York *Magazine, 755 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017-5998 or sent via e-mail to 76702.2510@compuserve.com. Please include a daytime phone number.*

Imus is *not* Howard Stern's "evil twin," because Imus is the original article. Stern isn't even in the same league! Imus is well-read, erudite, and opinionated, and that's why he is so popular with a wide range of listeners. Yes, he does push the envelope a bit, but his audience accepts it along with the brilliant, sometimes snide asides that make his show a hit. We love it when we hear wacky musical tunes like "I Like That Old Guy Robert Dole" or "Big-Butted Woman." We adore his special correspondents, like his chief political adviser, the late Richard M. Nixon. We clamor for favorites like Cardinal O'Connor, and we enjoy the regular visits from the "God Squad."

Okay, we're tired of hearing about four-legged Fred and Fred's Buffalo T-shirt business. He knows that, and doesn't care. And we know him, and care quite a bit.

Isabel Burk
NEW CITY, N.Y.

The Last Word

PHILIP WEISS'S INQUIRY INTO JEWISH IDENTIty is based on a simplistic notion of anti-Semitism and its relation to Jewishness ["Letting Go," January 29]. Mr. Weiss appears to suggest that Jews cannot acknowledge anti-Semitism without building their identities on it. He contends that American Jews (apart from the Orthodox) think of themselves as oppressed outsiders or, like himself, realize that anti-Semitism is of little consequence and refuse to identify themselves as victims.

But is there not a middle ground, where most American Jews likely reside? Mr. Weiss properly recognizes that Jews in America enjoy far more freedom of opportunity and association than at any time in the past, but he dismisses the fact that anti-Semitic views remain widespread—a 1992 Anti-Defamation League survey revealed that roughly 40 million Americans hold a collection of beliefs about Jews that are unquestionably anti-Semitic. And while anti-Semitism may not block the careers of Jews, its prevalence goes a long way toward explaining why, as Mr. Weiss notes with some puzzlement, 83 percent of Jews believe anti-Semitism is "a serious problem." Most Jews fear anti-Semitism not because they have some sort of psychological need for it but because it exists.

Lastly, Mr. Weiss contends that the ADL monitors anti-Semitism "while failing to gauge Jewish racism." Yet the ADL's 1993 survey on racial attitudes in America included a separate sampling of Jews, and the League has also published major reports on Meir Kahane and on his followers in the United States and Israel.

Abraham H. Foxman
National Director
Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith
MANHATTAN

Anon.

CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU AND WORD DEtective Donald Foster for your brilliant unmasking of Joe Klein as Anonymous, author of *Primary Colors* ["Primary Culprit," February 26]. The only other possible suspect(s) I could consider would be one or a pair of arch-schemers who would write the novel in Kleinstyle. Since I don't think an author with the necessary inside knowledge of the real political characters involved would want to go through all that extra effort, I have to believe also that Klein is Anonymous. My only other observation is that since Klein, a clever man, didn't change his singular writing style, he probably wanted to be discovered.

Wynn Loewenthal
MANHATTAN

House Proud

YOUR "INTELLIGENCER" ITEM ON THE NEW Jerry Speyer house under construction on East 72nd Street ["Where There's Heat, There's Speyer," January 29] is misleading. Having lived adjacent to the building during demolition of the brownstones and during the building project, we have suffered little annoyance. Mr. Speyer and his foreman have been diligent in informing our building agent of any unusual deliveries, changes of schedule, and changes of plans. But one can sympathize with the few residents who share party walls.

Bannon McHenry
MANHATTAN

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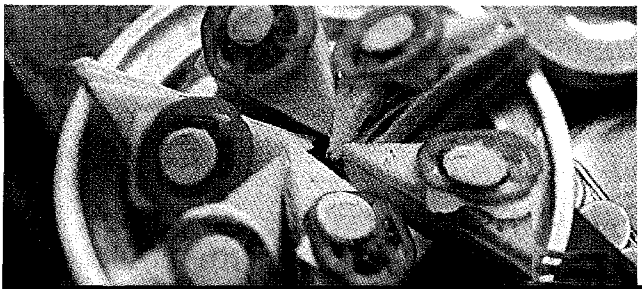

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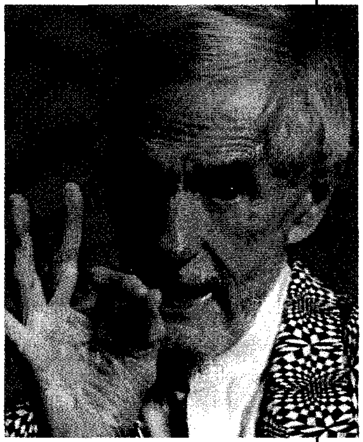
BY BETH LANDMAN AND DEBORAH MITCHELL

INTELLIGENCER

A TENTS STANDOFF IN BRYANT PARK

Are the 7th on Sixth tent shows falling apart at the seams? Until three years ago, when the Council of Fashion Designers of America organized the Bryant Park tents as a centralized venue, fashion shows were scattered across Manhattan. But now the season seems to be slipping into chaos once again. Fashion insiders are grumbling that the once-tony tent shows have become both too expensive and too downscale—scaring away some of the country's top couturiers. Several influential designers have deserted the shows this season, including **Todd Oldham, Joan Vass, Randy Kemper, Victor Alfaro, Badgley Mischka,** and **Michael Kors.** In their place, the CFDA is featuring such mass-market entries as **Parallel, BCBG, Bisou-Bisou,** and **Ski Industries America.** What's going on? Some designers, like **Geoffrey Beene** and **Marc Jacobs,** have never taken to the tents. "When you are a designer," says Jacobs, "the place that you show is a creative choice. I don't want it picked for me." Others, like Todd Oldham (who is defecting to the Puck Building this season), are less charitable. "Mostly, I didn't know *who* these designers were," he says of the new Bryant Park participants. But most of the defectors blame escalating costs. The price tag for a tent show can run up to $25,000—and that's not counting the stylists, the production designers, and, of course, the models. Despite the sniping, **Fern Mallis,** the CFDA's somewhat beleaguered executive director, is sticking to her guns. "People forget how smoothly things went at the tents," she says, predicting a "chaotic nightmare" at the increasingly popular Puck. And though critics complain she is selling out the shows to the highest bidder, Mallis bites back with charges of elitism. "Why *shouldn't* a line be able to show?" she says. "We don't play God and screen people."

TUNE IN, TURN ON, DROP OUT


Timothy Leary: Acid wit

Now that **Timothy Leary**'s deathbed vigil has turned into a long farewell party, Mercury Records president **Danny Goldberg** has decided to record it as a documentary video with an accompanying soundtrack CD. As a procession of pilgrims including **Yoko Ono,** Leary's goddaughter **Winona Ryder, Harry Dean Stanton,** and countless cyber fiends and artists flock to Leary's Beverly Hills home to pay their last respects, Mercury VP **David Silver** (he wrote the *Compleat Beatles* film) and crew have been filming the procession and interviewing Leary, who expounds on familiar subjects—death, Aldous Huxley, Allen Ginsberg, and the band Jane's Addiction. "His spirit is still in great shape," Silver says of Leary, who occasionally dips into the sensory-deprivation tank by his bed and who has named the trees in his yard Kareem, Magic, and so on, after various Los Angeles Lakers. "My pain is great, but it's interesting," the cancer-afflicted Leary tells his interviewer. "He is genuinely living his life to the end and refusing to be a victim," says **Bob Guccione Jr.,** a recent bedside companion. "Tim's last days run quite a long period of time, you understand." Meanwhile, the onetime acid king has also created a Website on which he faithfully records his daily intake. A sample from January: "3 cups of coffee, 36 cigarettes, 4 glasses of champagne, 1 midnight Brownie, 12 balloons of nitrous oxide, 3 lines of cocaine . . ."

IS HBO SICK OF THE KING OF POP?

Michael Jackson: Truly ill?

What's become of HBO's doomed **Michael Jackson** special? While the cable giant publicly insists it hasn't decided whether to revive the project—postponed after the singer's dramatic collapse last December—HBO insiders say the surgically enhanced bachelor-to-be has permanently scarred his relations with the company, which reportedly spent millions for concert rights and advertising, only to run Sylvester Stallone's *The Specialist* as a last-minute replacement. Though executives were at first sympathetic to the singer's claims of illness—variously described as dehydration, a viral infection, and an irregular heartbeat—company insiders now believe he was merely afflicted with a severe case of cold feet. Inside sources speculate that Jackson wanted out because he felt the Beacon's not-quite-mega-concert was "beneath him," and figured that illness seemed a lawsuit-proof escape. Officially, however, the company is broadcasting mixed messages about the future of *Michael Jackson: The King of Pop—One Night Only*. "It's not going to be rescheduled," an HBO spokesperson said definitively last week, returning moments later to announce, "It's still in the works."

NEWS CREW'S LAST GASP?

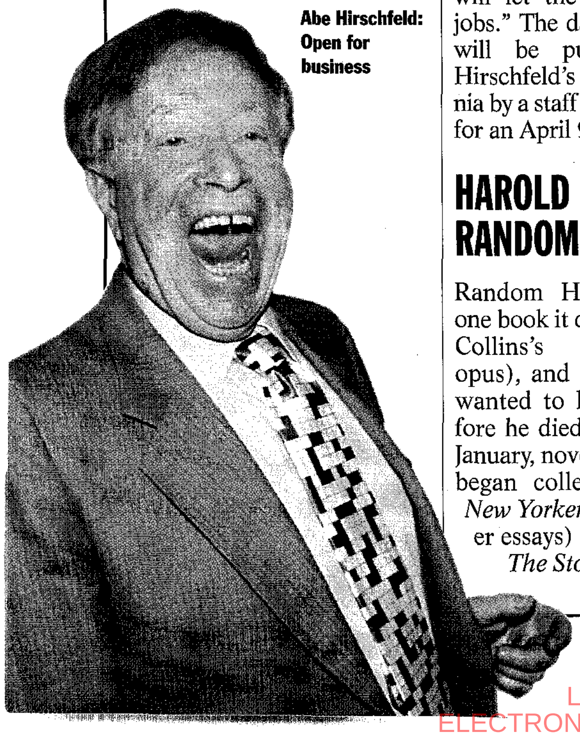
Recently departed *Daily News* editors **Richard Gooding** and **Laura Durkin** have found

The CFDA's new clothes?

Photographs: top, Steve Goldstein/Outline; bottom left, Russ Einhorn/Gamma-Liaison; bottom right, David Allen/LGI.

Liza Minnelli:
Feels like the first time

themselves an odd new home. The pair is taking over the two top slots at *Open Air PM,* a new afternoon paper to be published by loopy parking-lot tycoon **Abe Hirschfeld.** "You probably know my unfortunate history," sighs Gooding, who left his job as *Post* metro editor to join the *News,* and was edged out last year. "The idea now is to give a different news mix than the morning papers—less heavy on crime and politics, and more on international and national news as well as sports and features." And what of Hirschfeld's wacky antics during his brief period as publisher of the *Post*? "That was a chaotic period; this is an organized period," says Gooding optimistically. "I don't think you can compare them. He's a very innovative, creative thinker, and I've got his assurance that he will let the editors do their jobs." The daily paper—which will be published out of Hirschfeld's Hotel Pennsylvania by a staff of 90—is shooting for an April 9 debut.



Abe Hirschfeld:
Open for
business

BARRY SLOTNICK: UNMARRIED TO THE MOB

Now that **Barry Slotnick** is back in court defending alleged Genovese boss **Vincent "Chin" Gigante,** people are wondering why the celebrated criminal lawyer has taken on so few big mob cases of late. Slotnick, who made his name representing crime boss **Joseph Colombo Sr.** in 1966, had clients like **Ralph Scopo Sr., Aniello Dellacroce,** and **John Carneglia.** But in recent years, Slotnick's client list has been almost mafiosi-free. Why? Sources say Slotnick decided to pare down his organized-crime caseload after he was assaulted in what seemed to be a vengeful Mafia hit. It's a story straight from a Martin Scorsese–Nicholas Pileggi screenplay: In July 1987, a man with a hard, blunt object wrapped in a newspaper attacked Slotnick as he was stepping into his chauffeur-driven Cadillac outside his offices on Lower Broadway. His assailant—who was never captured—broke Slotnick's wrist (not his kneecaps) before escaping. Though Slotnick insists he was mugged for his Piaget watch, underworld sources offer a more nefarious explanation. The attack, they say, was ordered by **John Gotti,** who had a financial beef with the lawyer. Slotnick calls the story "ludicrous" and says he's concentrating on civil work because "it's easier, more profitable, and more fun." Whatever the reason, it's true that the dapper attorney has been focusing on slightly less dangerous family feuds. Slotnick recently handled **Fred Tepperman**'s megabucks suit against his ex-boss, **Ron Perelman** and is working on **Anthony Quinn**'s recent divorce from wife Iolanda.

Barry Slotnick:
Uncivil wars

HAROLD BRODKEY'S RANDOM DIS

Random House now owns one book it doesn't want (Joan Collins's much-maligned opus), and it just lost one it wanted to keep. Shortly before he died of AIDS this past January, novelist **Harold Brodkey** began collecting his recent *New Yorker* articles (and other essays) into a book called *The Story of My Death,* a slim volume originally to be published by Random House. But sources say that after clashing with several Random House editors, the notoriously difficult author packed up his manuscript and defected to Henry Holt, now headed by his close friend and former German publisher **Michael Naumann.** Brodkey's widow says the novelist decided to move the book shortly before his death. "Michael was a serious, long-term supporter of Harold's work," says Brodkey's wife, **Ellen Schwamm.** "Once Michael [came to] New York, it was Harold's great wish to be with him." The decision to part with Random House was "friendly," she insists. "I don't want to make it into something it's not."

FOR LIZA, LIFE IS A CABARET, AGAIN

Evidently bored with the straight and narrow, **Liza Minnelli** is happily reliving her wild salad days. The frenetic chanteuse made a splash last week at **Ingrid Casares**'s pansexual club, Liquid, when she showed up and—without imbibing a single drink—began dancing onstage as fast as she could. Soon after, Liza galloped over to the D.J. booth, where she proceeded to frantically adjust the mood and play with the smoke machines until fellow revelers started grabbing for their shades. Finally, a laughing Liza turned her attention to the turntables, where she played old disco favorites until the wee hours. Obviously, she had a good time. Still energetic when she finally left the club at six the next morning, she vowed she'd return for her upcoming 50th-birthday party. "Bianca did it at Studio 54 and Liza's going to do it at Liquid," said the twelve-stepping diva, who has recently been stepping out at L.A.'s hippest nightspots as well.

ELEVATING OTIS: Why—after being rejected by nearly everyone in Hollywood—was **Joe Eszterhas**'s script about **Otis Redding,** *Blaze of Glory,* suddenly snatched up by Universal for $1.5 million? Word is it's because the artist once again known as **Prince** has expressed an inexplicable desire to play Redding in the movie. "It's too soon to be talking about casting," says **Jon** (*Up Close and Personal*) **Avnet,** who will be directing the movie. Insists a spokeswoman for the Purple One: "I've never heard of it."

ROUND TWO: Now that she has recovered from her bruising battle for attorney general, combative **Karen Burstein** is gearing up for a new fight: a run for the powerful surrogate court. "People have asked me to do it, and I'm definitely considering it," says Burstein, who has her eye on the seat of vulnerable incumbent **Renee Roth.**

Additional reporting: Matthew Pincus and Maria Ricapito.

Photographs: top, Frederico Mendes/Gamma-Liaison; center,Rick Maiman/Sygma; bottom, Andrea Renault/Globe Photos.

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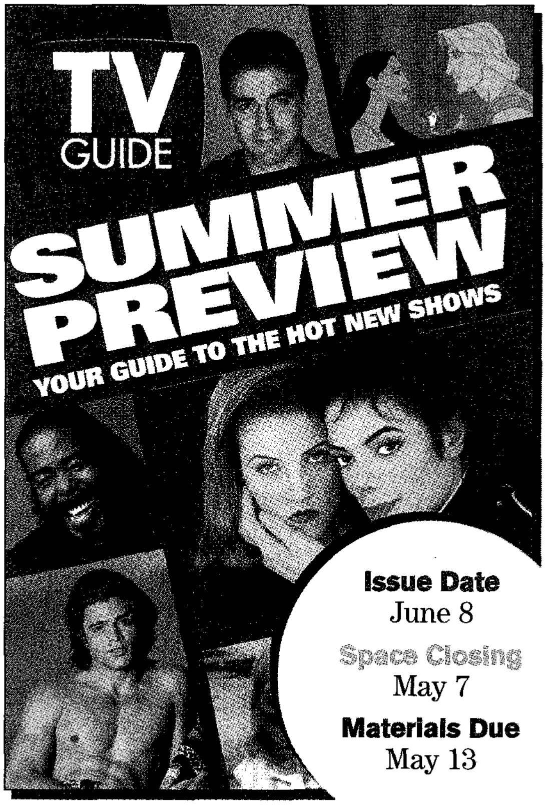

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GOTHAM

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THE FRONT PAGE

Our President Charming

Alas, the political pool, like the dating pool, is full of frogs.

When was the last time you felt giddy going into a polling booth, exhilarated to pull the lever or punch the name of the one who was going to change your life, the one who would make your dreams come true? When was the last time it felt good, or even okay, or didn't make your stomach hurt, or you didn't have to go and lie down for a while afterward?

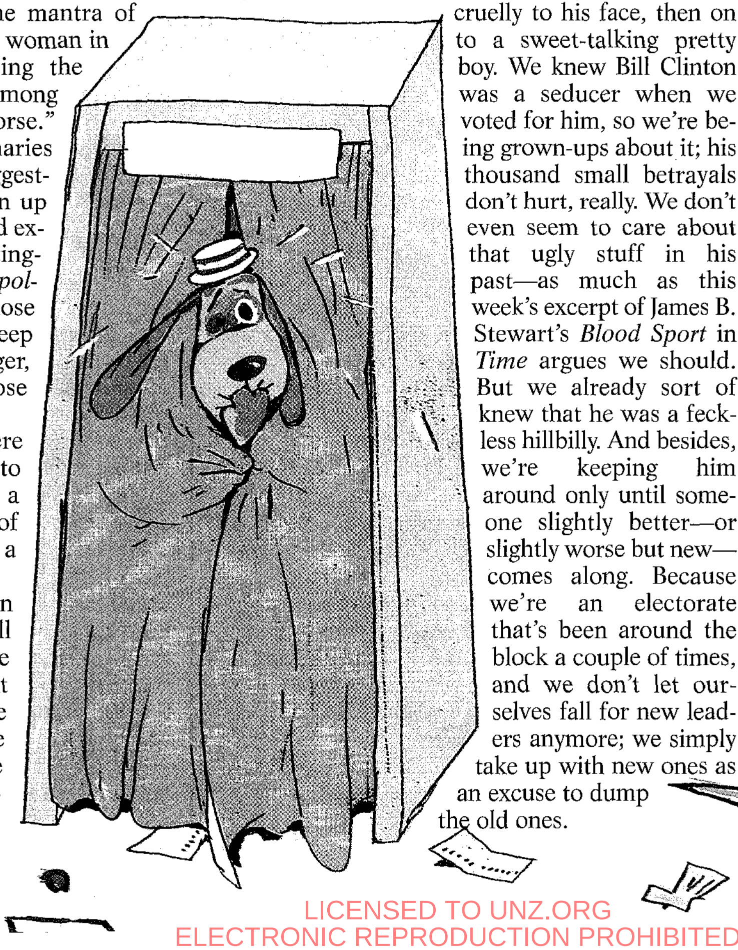
Voting has never been much different from dating, but now that we've been in the voting game for a while, the similarities are no longer the fun ones.

"The only reason I'm voting for Dole is because I can't stand the other guys," one Connecticut Republican said last week. A New York voter sounded the mantra of every 35-year-old single woman in Manhattan by describing the GOP field as a choice among "bad, bad, and worse." Turnout for the primaries was shamefully low, suggesting many had just given up on voting altogether, and exit polls read like a dating-history survey in *Cosmopolitan:* Nearly half of those still brave enough to keep voting wanted a bigger, better pool to choose from.

But inevitably, there was settling. "He seems to be a very decent man," a Brooklyn voter said of Dole. "I'm sure he is a good Republican."

Oh, to be young again and believe there is still that perfect candidate out there, our President Charming! But we are not so young, or, as we now call it, naïve. Gone are the palpitating infatuations—remember those cute Kennedy boys?—that ended in heartbreak. After that, of course, we voted a string of losers, only to believe in leaders again and throw ourselves into the arms of an older man who promised to take care of us. But Ronald Reagan, we discovered too late, could not understand our needs.

And so we became hard and cynical. We found ourselves rebounding capriciously, first to a patrician sugar daddy whom we mocked cruelly to his face, then on to a sweet-talking pretty boy. We knew Bill Clinton was a seducer when we voted for him, so we're being grown-ups about it; his thousand small betrayals don't hurt, really. We don't even seem to care about that ugly stuff in his past—as much as this week's excerpt of James B. Stewart's *Blood Sport* in *Time* argues we should. But we already sort of knew that he was a feckless hillbilly. And besides, we're keeping him around only until someone slightly better—or slightly worse but new—comes along. Because we're an electorate that's been around the block a couple of times, and we don't let ourselves fall for new leaders anymore; we simply take up with new ones as an excuse to dump the old ones.



SNIPE OF THE WEEK The Transit Authority has unveiled a plan to set traps to try to catch speeding subway motormen. But according to one driver, the TA itself is to blame for the growing number of accidents from running subterranean red lights. "The training is inadequate," the motorman told *New York.* "A lot of motormen I work with say they don't feel comfortable with the train, but basically [being promoted] from porter to a motorman is $4 more an hour, so of course they're going to take it. They just hope like hell that nothing happens to them."

GOOD DOG "Banning a very safe food like hot dogs—even though it was a tragic occurrence—is an unfortunate reaction. Hot dogs have evolved to become a food of the nineties. They're nutritious: Many of the hot dogs of today are lower in fat. Getting kids that age to eat food is a miracle, period. But kids love hot dogs," Janet Riley of the American Meat Institute and the National Hot Dog and Sausage Council told *New York,* after Schools Chancellor Rudy Crew announced a review of the school menu following the death of an East Harlem schoolgirl from choking on a hot dog.

OVERHEARD At the Hermès sample sale last week: Customer holding a brown pigskin organizer: "Oh look, it's got initials on it!" Saleswoman: "Maybe that's the one Christy Turlington got for Christian Slater. Then they broke up and she never came in to get it."

City

A DELI MAN

THE HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE GATHERED AT the Community Synagogue to mourn Abe Lebewohl last Tuesday all seemed to express the same thought as they filed in to their seats: It was hard to believe the guy was dead. It's often like that at funerals, but in this case the fact was especially hard to swallow. Not only had Lebewohl, the owner of the Second Avenue Deli, been a giant and animated presence on the Lower East Side for generations, but his murder—in his own neighborhood, in broad daylight—seemed unusually random and senseless. Many of the deli's patrons heard about it only accidentally, during newscasts they'd tuned into for information about that day's terrorist attack in Tel Aviv.

Rabbi Penkower, the aging congregation's emeritus leader, reminded the crowd of that tragic coincidence—and of the fact that the murder's early accounts, which had failed to mention the accompanying robbery, had not only misidentified but also misunderstood the crime. "*Apparently nothing was taken*—I tell you, friends, that was a wrong announcement," said Penkower ruefully. "Everything that endeared him to his people was taken."

Because the funeral fell on the second day of Purim, Judaism's most raucous holiday, tradition dictated that the ceremony be as brief as possible. Penkower did his best. "Beside the fact that we're not allowed to indulge in eulogies, here lies a eulogy in itself," he said. "And that explains why we're all gathered here." He paused for a long moment. "It also explains," he continued, but his voice trailed off again. And then, without a sound, he went pale and crumpled to the ground. Several hundred people gasped or screamed in horror, and reflexively lunged forward—even those in the balcony, as if from such a distance they could break his fall.

The ceremony's quiet sorrow was lost to panic. Amid calls for an ambulance, mourners in the first few pews rushed to the pulpit and tried to revive him. "Daddy, can you hear me?" a desperate voice cried several times while they draped the rabbi in, for lack of a blanket, white linen prayer shawls. Someone knelt over him, ripped his shirt open, and began pumping away at his chest.

Mrs. Lebewohl, in no condition to witness such a scene, was led up the aisle and out the door just as the firemen trundled in with oxygen tanks and IV drips. Minutes later they wheeled the rabbi into an ambulance, his ribs visible through translucent skin.

"The rabbi is, *baruch hashem,* awake," announced a much younger man as the gray-draped coffin was wheeled back into place. "We wish him a speedy recovery."

FUNERAL SERVICES FOR
ABE LEBEWOHL
WILL BE HELD
12:00 NOON
MMUNITY SYNAGOGUE
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1995
NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION

The Second Avenue Deli last Tuesday.

It was difficult to comprehend all the news; the gaunt and lifeless form slumped across the stretcher was said to be alive, while the man famous for his energy and enthusiasm once again lay before us, dead; in the confusion, people started to eulogize the rabbi. "I heard him speak at a couple of funerals, and I was always impressed," said one woman to her neighbor.

Almost as suddenly as it had been derailed, the ceremony got back under way with a prayer and an announcement, and then Lebewohl's daughter, Sharon, ended it by reading aloud a letter she'd written to her father. Though she had always loved him, she recalled, she had not always gotten along with him; in a faltering voice, she explained what the problem had been: "As a child it was very difficult for me to understand why you did the things you did. So many of my friends had parents who were doctors and lawyers. I really couldn't understand then what I understand now: You were a deli man."

Filing back out of the cramped synagogue, the mourners paused on the steps to blink at the noonday sun. They were a diverse lot: many Orthodox men and women, black-clad reminders of the population that was once both the neighborhood's and the deli's mainstay; black-clad kids from Tompkins Square Park; and a number of the deli's more famous regulars—Ruth Messinger, Morley Safer, Raoul Felder, William Bratton among them.

Enjoying the unseasonable weather, everyone stood about doing his or her best to contribute to the vast body of Lebewohl legends. People spoke of his childhood during the Holocaust, of his outsize personality, of his boundless curiosity (he read at least three newspapers a day—"and that was just the English ones," said his daughter), and of his friendships with everyone from politicians to pornographers. Most of all, though, they remembered his willingness to feed people who came to the restaurant hungry but broke, and the deliveries he personally made to striking workers around town. Of course, he'd had his own labor troubles lately, with picketers demonstrating outside what had long been the only area restaurant to pay union wages. But those troubles seemed far away; even the Local 100, Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union, had eulogized him in the New York *Times.*

"I always felt it was as close as I could come to eating at home," said Henry Dreher of the Second Avenue Deli, "since both my parents are deceased and I can't actually go back. The waitresses all have maternal qualities, and the waiters all yell at you, and that always seemed very much like home." Dreher was standing with Perry Gewirtz, a slight, bearded man whom he introduced as his newfound relative. "I'd always heard about Perry from my uncle," said Dreher, "and when I saw him here, I just knew that had to be him."

"You see," he joked, "Abe brought people together."

Many of those whom he'd brought together over the years were gone now, as was the Yiddish-theater scene that the restaurant's décor, and walk of stars, paid tribute to. And with Abe himself now gone, there was reason to detect the end of an era. "Abe's passing, it's almost like the last—like a part of New York is dying," Carolyn Barax worried aloud.

Finally, a few Hasidim in traditional black hats and black brocade jackets exited the synagogue. They signaled that it was time; with a few others, they bore the plain pine box up the block, put it in the hearse, got in their cars, and set off for the burial at Montefiore Cemetery. The body's departure did little to disperse the crowd, however; they stood around for another hour or so, reminiscing and commiserating.

Photograph by Bernd Auers.

As they finally wandered home past the shuttered deli, now decorated with bouquets and Yahrzeit candles, two old men paused to consider their losses: 60 in Israel, and Lebewohl. "It hasn't been a good week, Max," one said to the other. "Not this week." ARIEL KAMINER

Politics

DAVE, AND MIMOSAS TOO

DAVID DINKINS, RESTED AND NEARLY effervescent, began a slow victory lap through the four dark-wood main rooms of the National Arts Club, basking in unmasked adoration from 500 close friends. He chucked his former security guard on the shoulder, bowed his head to Isac Weinberger, the Democratic Party stalwart from Brooklyn. He greeted State Senator Franz Leichter at the door, saying: "Mimosas are here, and I hear there is food in the back." They fixed eyes and smiled, with genuine warmth.

"This is not about politics," Arnie Segarra, who had served as the advance man for the city's 106th mayor, was telling a guest. "This is about getting together. This is about love."

Last year, Segarra organized a Dinkins-mayoral-administration reunion at Gus' Place in the Village for 130 people. This year, he also invited refugees from the Dinkins Manhattan borough presidency as well as friends, funders, associates, sycophants, challengers, and familiars, such as the surgeon who performed Dinkins's triple bypass last August.

There was real-estate mogul Jack Rudin and former police commissioner Ray Kelly, Milt Mollen, Congressman Charles Schumer, and congressional aspirant Willie Colon, who showed off his new Masonic watch. Former staff members Bill Lynch, the Democratic adviser, and Victor Kovner, the First Amendment attorney, were denying they wrote *Primary Colors* while Bronx borough president Fernando Ferrer was calling the book "very funny" (Dinkins denied he'd read it). He compared notes with Claire Shulman and the USA Network's Kathleen Murphy, his bubbly tennis partner, on learning TelePrompTer. "The first one I used was at the Democratic National Convention," Dinkins said. "They don't like you to mess up, so they train you."

Murphy and Shulman nodded exuberantly.

With each new encounter, Dinkins grew lighter on his feet. But, however agile, he was unable to shake Raven Chanticleer, a very toothy man in flouncing minstrel's cap and tapestry pants who was responsible for the wax sculpture of Dinkins that stunned each new arrival. It more resembled Buddy

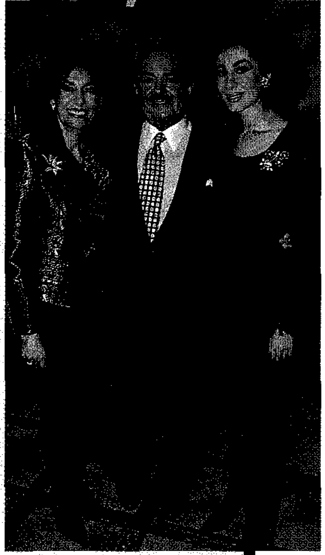
THE SCENE

Cold Blood

At Tribeca Film Center for the debut of Joel and Ethan Coen's 'Fargo.'

By Ariel Kaminer

Photographed by Patrick McMullan



JOHN WATERS JUST WANTED TO say how much he enjoyed the Coen brothers' new film, a tale of murder in very-small-town Minnesota. Enjoyed *watching* the film, that is; the somewhat finicky director couldn't exactly see himself following their lead and shooting scenes out on the plains. The director of *Serial Mom,* a tale of murder in small-town Maryland, explained, "I live in Baltimore; we all sorta stick to our own weirdo area. Anyway, to make fun of an area in a good way, you have to love it. You really have to know it. I think they really respected and loved their characters."

If so, it's a tough love at best: Guests at the premiere approvingly used the phrase "a return to *Blood Simple*" to convey the fact that an inordinate number of those beloved characters end up as dark stains on the windy snowscape. Which Buck Henry, screenwriter of the dark, funny *To Die For*—a tale of murder in small-town New Hampshire—found only appropriate. "Where," he asked, "does blood look better than in the snow?"

Top, Paul Newman and Brad Pitt at Tribeca Film Center party for *Fargo.* Above, Soheir Khashoggi, author of *Mirage,* with her brother Adnan and sister-in-law Shahpari Khashoggi, who hosted a party for the book's release. Left, Diane Sawyer and Mike Nichols at Roseland for the premiere of Nichols's *Birdcage.*

Above, Carly Simon with husband Jim Hart, Rose Styron, and Jules Feiffer at the *Birdcage* party. Left, Tony Randall, winner of the Montblanc de la Culture Award, with wife Heather at the National Arts Club ceremony.

Ebsen. Invited by the National Arts Club's president (who perversely kept beseeching photographers to shoot the mannequin), Chanticleer minnowed behind Dinkins while siphoning champagne and declaring this "a glorious day for the laudable ex-mayor Dinkins and his wife . . . God bless us!"

Dinkins struggled to not notice. He pivoted toward a man in a very musty toupee, and hooted, "Hey, Mr. Ambassador! Bless your heart." Only when politics was raised did Dinkins's relaxed smile tilt. Since leaving office, he has holed up at Columbia (as a professor of public affairs) and at Revlon (as a consultant, along with Andrew Stein and Lynch, who is a VP at Revlon parent company MacAndrew & Forbes). He's on the board of the American Stock Exchange, a half-dozen corporations, and eighteen nonprofits, mostly dealing with children; and he's got a twice-weekly radio show on WLIB that seldom generates attention. He has spoken out about city issues only rarely and faintly, and mostly at the hectoring of Ed Koch.

Dave Dinkins and Fernando Ferrer.

Some in the room lamented this. "Well, he *is* still alive," whispered one reveler, a former staff member. When the writer Letty Cottin Pogrebin, clutching an orange juice, buttonholed him about some "black-Jewish coalitions" she'd like him to join, he seemed entirely elsewhere. "You changed your hair without my permission," he said finally. "I like it!"

As he walked away, she said, "He's a person of such dignity . . . I think he's been in recovery. It was a grueling campaign, and he deserves some recovery time."

Fernando Ferrer defended the lower profile. "Apart from commenting on the mayor from time to time, he's staying out of it," Ferrer was telling people. "Look, he paid his dues; he did what he had to do. I don't think he's explicitly seeking a role in politics. But I would hardly call him *silent*."

Tellingly, Ferrer was the only one of the triumvirate of likely Giuliani challengers on hand. Neither Ruth Messinger nor Mark Green arrived at the lunch, although they both personally sent their regrets. Carl McCall didn't make it (his wife represented him), nor did comptroller Alan Hevesi, City Council Speaker Peter Vallone, Congressman Charles Rangel, or public-relations power broker Howard Rubenstein. Abe Beame was kind enough to regret beforehand, as was mentioned from a podium once everybody sat down to eat.

That's when Dinkins did make a low-cal political speech, for which he asked forgiveness. He lamented "the stewardship of my successor" and bemoaned a spike in police-brutality charges that suggests the city is "dangerously close to an attitude of the ends' justifying the means.

"Too many good people are silent," Dinkins continued, somewhat ironically. "So I would just commend to your attention: Speak up. Have something to say. And for God's sake, when somebody has something unkind to say about some other ethnic or religious group, don't join in. Don't laugh. Don't show your approval. It ought not be acceptable or respectable to be a bigot."

The audience clapped encouragingly, but there in the front was Raven Chanticleer, flashing his camera and leaping to his feet. "Bravo, bravo!" he shouted, knocking over a glass on his table. "Thank you, Brother David!"

Within minutes, the Dinkinses, lipstick pocking their cheeks, were slipping through the marble foyer—past Chanticleer, who called out, "I'll talk to you tomorrow"—and into a private car, quietly, unescorted, and evidently relieved to be going home. DAVID FRANCE

Arts

IN CHARACTERS

FORTY OR SO DOWNTOWN TYPES IN FLIMSY summer outfits are standing in line waiting to get into the Limelight, and since it is only about twenty degrees outside, they are shivering. A tall bald man in a business suit, meanwhile, is pacing back and forth, sticking his tongue out as far as it will go and performing a series of huge, dramatic yawns. A young guy in a baseball hat puts his hand on the bald guy's shoulder.

"Remember," he says helpfully, "you're the type of guy who would never get in."

Inside the club, Kenny Kenny, the notoriously caustic drag-queen doorman for the Limelight, is not happy. "I'm Irish," he says. "And I've got a lot of different levels, and you're not getting that in this scene. You're just getting one side of me."

The idea behind *Shampoo Horns,* a $1 million independent feature, was that actual drag queens and club kids would play themselves, but director Manuel Toledano has been finding that their idea of themselves is perhaps not a lot of other people's idea of them.

"I had a lot problems with Kenny Kenny," says the 21-year-old NYU film-school graduate. "He did not understand that sometimes you have to emphasize just one of your traits."

In the actors' holding room, Tobell, a drag queen wearing a teddy-bear-head hat and pink mascara, feels Toledano is emphasizing a trait she doesn't even possess. "In real life, I'm a really nice person," Tobell says. "During the movie, I'm bitchy, bitchy, bitchy; nothing is *ever* right."

"It was worse in rehearsals," says the director, seemingly happy that the four-week shoot is near the end. "I could barely get them together to learn lines."

But, he adds, "most of them didn't have problems. For example, Michael [a Limelight party promoter] didn't have a problem being the egomaniac that he is. In fact, he was enjoying it."

Outside, despite his reservations, Kenny Kenny has decided to act like a pro. The drag giant strides out onto the set in a shaggy, hip-length fake-fur coat. The assistant director says, "Action!"

KENNY KENNY: Can I see some I.D.?

BALD MAN: You've *got* to be kidding.

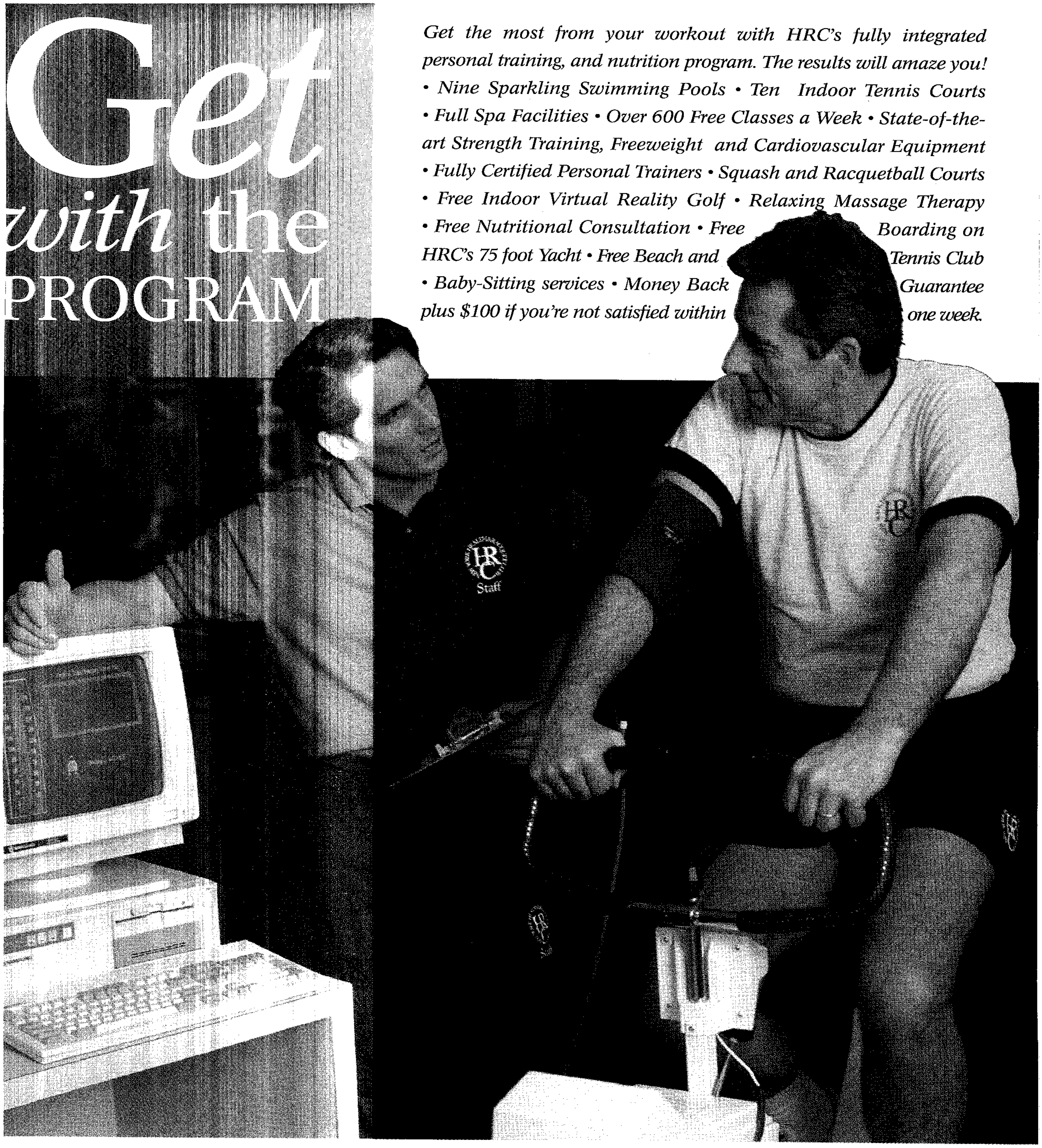
KENNY KENNY: You'll have to go home to get some.

BALD MAN: I'm a *lawyer*—you can't do this. It's called public discrimination!"

KENNY KENNY: *Sue* me, sweetheart.

The director is pleased. He calls for another take. NORMAN VANAMEE

On the set of *Shampoo Horns*.



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THE NATIONAL INTEREST JACOB WEISBERG

Is Bob Dole Bob Dole?

His habit of referring to himself in the third person is more than a tic—it bespeaks a profound discomfort with the requirements of modern politicking.

THREE WEEKS AGO, BOB DOLE WAS WIDELY PORTRAYED as politically enfeebled to the point of hopelessness, a failing old warhorse looking for pity votes on his way to the glue factory. Following his convincing victories in South Carolina, Georgia, New England, and New York last week, he has taken on the epithet *newly energized* and is universally acknowledged to be the GOP nominee apparent. Pressed to explain what happened, members of the pundit class have resorted to a series of stock formulations: Dole has updated his message, caught fire, "found his voice" in battling Pat Buchanan "for the heart and soul of the Republican Party."

Dole aides chuckle over this line of interpretation, because they know that while his mood has for obvious reasons improved, it's effect rather than cause—they know there is essentially no change in their boss's message or delivery. There is no appreciable difference between the Bob Dole who was flatlining in New Hampshire and the Bob Dole collecting high fives from his former opponents on his way to San Diego. Not only has Dole not improved; he's essentially *incapable* of improvement. On his swing through New York last week, he was his same erratic, messageless self, turning in performances that ranged from the terrible to the merely tepid. He offered the same lightly self-mocking jokes and pulled the same card from his pocket to read the Tenth Amendment (only 28 words—you'd think he'd have memorized it by now). Often, he seemed to mock the notion that he should offer something more. "I have reporters telling me, 'Where's your vision for America?' " he told one of his audiences upstate. "I don't know. My vision for America is to have a better America." (This is not quite equal to my favorite Doleism: "The future. That's where we're headed.")

What really happened in the sadly brief primary season is that Republican voters took a look at the alternatives to Dole and realized there weren't any. Phil Gramm was a social Darwinist reveling in his own meanness. Steve Forbes was an economics-club bore promoting the policy equivalent of a Veg-O-Matic via infomercial saturation bombing. Pat Buchanan offered a traveling Nuremberg-revival show with none of the production values. The only remotely plausible alternative to Dole was Lamar Alexander, whose baggage included a personal-enrichment scheme that made Whitewater look penny-ante and who touted policies that simply failed to make any sense ("plaid ideas," remarked Dole, devastatingly). Beyond that, it was the decent-to-the-last Dick Lugar and three fringe candidates charitably described as variations on the theme of clinical. Bob Dole was the least lousy candidate of the bunch.

Far from improving on the stump, Dole has actually gotten worse. Endeavoring to punch up his message and take advantage of his personal story, he now sounds false notes. Dole used to talk reluctantly about his war experience, shielding you from the horror while at the same time communicating a sense of hidden depths. In so doing, he brilliantly inverted the whole concept of generational appeal; he understood that the silent generation retains the respect of the nation in a way that baby-boomers like Clinton probably never will. There was something powerfully compelling about his volunteering for "one more mission."

The "mission" line has vanished from his speeches. Now Dole promiscuously describes his suffering—he couldn't go to the bathroom by himself, he tells audiences—explaining that it taught him empathy for others. "I'm very sensitive to people who must have help," he told a rally at an aircraft hangar in Albany last week that included a group of veterans of the 10th Mountain Division, the corps in which Dole served. "Those with disabilities, those without any income, the elderly, the young." At Enidine, Inc., outside of Buffalo, Dole made this rather amazing statement: "President Clinton says, *I feel your pain.* Well, I'll tell you, I share your pain." Pat Buchanan also refers to this Clinton line in his speeches. According to White House press secretary Michael McCurry, Bill Clinton has never spoken those exact words except in a spirit of self-parody (he did say during the 1992 campaign that "it makes a difference if the person in the White House can feel the pain and imagine the promise of every American"). But the point of the joke is that Clinton's vote-seeking empathy *is* somewhat ridiculous. Dole is now preposterously

Illustration by Joe Ciardiello.

trying to out-Clinton Clinton: *I really* am *in pain, and thus am even* more *sympathetic to your problems.*

Hence: "The last thing Bob Dole will ever do is take it away from poor people." Is it my imagination, or is the majority leader talking about himself in the third person more than ever? I can't remember hearing him do this before the campaign, and Joyce Campbell of Dole's Senate press office confirms that on the Senate floor Dole is first-person all the way. Though much mocked by reporters for this habit (National Public Radio had a long riff that included such gems as "Give Patrick Henry liberty or give Patrick Henry death"; "René Descartes thinks, therefore René Descartes is"; and "Call Ishmael Ishmael"), Dole hasn't been able to shake it. In the South Carolina debate, he answered a question about his choice of a running mate by saying he wanted "somebody who understands Bob Dole." Bob Dole's use of the royal me means something—but what?

For what it's worth, here's my explanation. "Bob Dole" is Bob Dole's ideal self. "I want to take about one minute to tell you who Bob Dole is," he told the crowd in Albany, going on to talk about growing up in Russell, Kansas, where his dad "wore his overalls to work every day for 42 years" and his mother "sold Singer sewing machines all over western Kansas." After recovering from his injuries, "Bob Dole" continued to embody their values, becoming a dignified, principled, and respected leader of his party, admired by his colleagues for his ability to get things done. "Bob Dole is not a polarizer." Bob Dole is not an ideologue. In a revealing identification, he compares himself to a plumber or an auto mechanic; Bob Dole fixes legislation. Bob Dole doesn't like to talk about Bob Dole.

But the campaigning Bob Dole recognizes that the laudable, prelapsarian traits don't necessarily cut it in modern presidential politics, and that he must learn to shimmy with the younger set. "You never know quite what resonates because you don't know what people are thinking," the candidate told Katharine Seelye of the New York *Times.* "What do they really want you to say? What's on their mind? Maybe it's something we haven't touched on." It was the protean Bob Dole as opposed to the senatorial "Bob Dole" who told a New Hampshire audience last year: "I'll be Ronald Reagan if that's what you want." It's this Dole who can't decide what to do with a check from the Log Cabin Club, or what he thinks about abortion. It's this Dole who has been trying to steal the clothes of both Buchanan and Forbes, demagoguing Boutros Boutros-Ghali and the IRS, sounding like an economic nationalist one minute and a supply-sider the next. Of course, "Bob Dole" would never pander like that. "Bob Dole" remains unsullied.

This conflict is bound to become more intense as the campaign heats up. Most of Dole's advisers believe he needs a message that draws on the economic insecurity that motivates Buchanan voters, not just to bury Buchanan but to beat Clinton. But here he faces a huge disadvantage. Clinton has the personal plasticity to adapt and really believe his ever evolving positions. Dole is less malleable by nature, and, like most septuagenarians, set in his ways. There's an appeal to this rock-ribbedness, but Dole's clumsy marketing undercuts it. When Dole really finds his voice, we'll know it, because he'll quit talking about Bob Dole like an imaginary friend.

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CITYSIDE JOHN CONNOLLY

Passing the Bucks

The Justice Department's budget-balancing privatization scheme raises questions about a certain U.S. marshal in New York—while raising costs too.

HERE'S A LITTLE REVOLVING-DOOR DEAL TO MAKE THE blood boil in this time of budget-balancing fanaticism. It takes some explaining, so be patient.

As anyone who has ever served on a federal jury knows, prisoner security is handled by an elite corps known as the U.S. Marshals, who technically are appointed by the president and are part of the Justice Department. Those providing the actual muscle in the courtroom are known as the deputy marshals—there are about 140 in New York City—who make up to $60,000 a year and are backed up by part-time deputies hired on a free-lance basis when full-time marshals are overextended. *New York* has learned that beginning in 1994, when the federal budget called for the firing of more than a quarter-million government workers, the U.S. Marshals Service began phasing out regular part-timers, the so-called intermittent deputies, who were paid $16.48 an hour, only to replace them with guards from a private security firm at a rate of $19.89 an hour. Thus, while President Clinton and Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich argue over who's more guilty of budgetary cronyism and legerdemain, actual taxpayer dollars are being wasted to provide security for the New York federal courts.

As egregious as that may be, the company receiving that largesse, United Security Inc., was originally founded by Michael A. Pizzi, the U.S. marshal for the Eastern District of New York, whose office uses those guards. In the past year, Pizzi's former company, now headed by his friend and former partner Carmine Aquila, has been granted contracts totaling almost $5 million to guard prisoners in the entire city as well as on Long Island. Not only do Pizzi's ties with United raise serious conflict-of-interest questions, but considering that Pizzi, Aquila, and another director of United had all been employed by a firm that was fired by the Marshals Service in late 1992 on charges of bribery and tax evasion, the connection verges on impropriety.

Two years ago, Mike Pizzi was nominated to be a U.S. marshal by New York's senior senator, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, and he was eventually appointed by President Clinton. Moynihan's spokesman Kevin Sheeky says, "We put his name forward at the requests of federal district judge Reena Raggi and Chief Judge Thomas C. Platt." Pizzi, who often prefaces his statements with an "I'll tell you the truth," said that he did not pursue the marshal job but was asked by someone else—district judge Eugene Nickerson—to take the post. During an interview in his Brooklyn office, overlooking the on-ramp to the Brooklyn Bridge, Pizzi says, "I came back to work because duty called. For all of this work, I am taking home only $250 more a week than if I stayed at home collecting my pension." In late 1991, after 26 years working for the federal government, Pizzi retired as a chief deputy marshal of the Southern District and became chief financial officer of Central Security Systems, Inc., a Staten Island–based security firm that at the time was being investigated by the IRS as well as the U.S. Attorney's office on a variety of criminal charges.

CSSI was later fired by the Marshals Service in October 1992 amid charges of overbilling and underpayment of taxes on the company's $100 million in government contracts. A month later, Nicholas Pastoressa, the former president and founder of CSSI, and two other CSSI officials pleaded guilty to bribing a Marshals Service official to get federal contracts. United Security's current president, Carmine Aquila, and company director, Christine Gelatt, were both former high-level employees of CSSI, but neither was ever charged with any wrongdoing.

Pizzi contends that although he was aware of the investigation when he took the reins of CSSI in late 1991, he believed in the innocence of the people involved. "I resigned from CSSI when I knew for sure that they were guilty," he says. Soon thereafter, CSSI folded amid a spate of civil suits, including one brought by the celebrated private investigator Jules Kroll, who along with former *New York Law Journal* publisher Jerry Finkelstein had invested in the company. On December 15, 1992, Pizzi formed United Security; a state document dated March 1993 lists Pizzi as president.

The chronology of Pizzi's appointment is revealing: On June 1, 1994, United Security was awarded a base contract of $1,833,972 to furnish security for the Southern District of New York—that is, for federal cases in Manhattan and the Bronx. Ten days later, Pizzi resigned from the company he founded and sold his shares back to his partners Aquila and Gelatt for just $9,000—the amount of money he had invested almost two years earlier. Two days after that, he was appointed a U.S. marshal, and five months later, United was granted a whopping $3,081,166 contract to provide security for Marshal Pizzi's domain in Brooklyn, Staten Island, Queens, and Long Island. Pizzi says, "I only use one or two of United's people a day—occasionally I use as many as six," but some courthouse

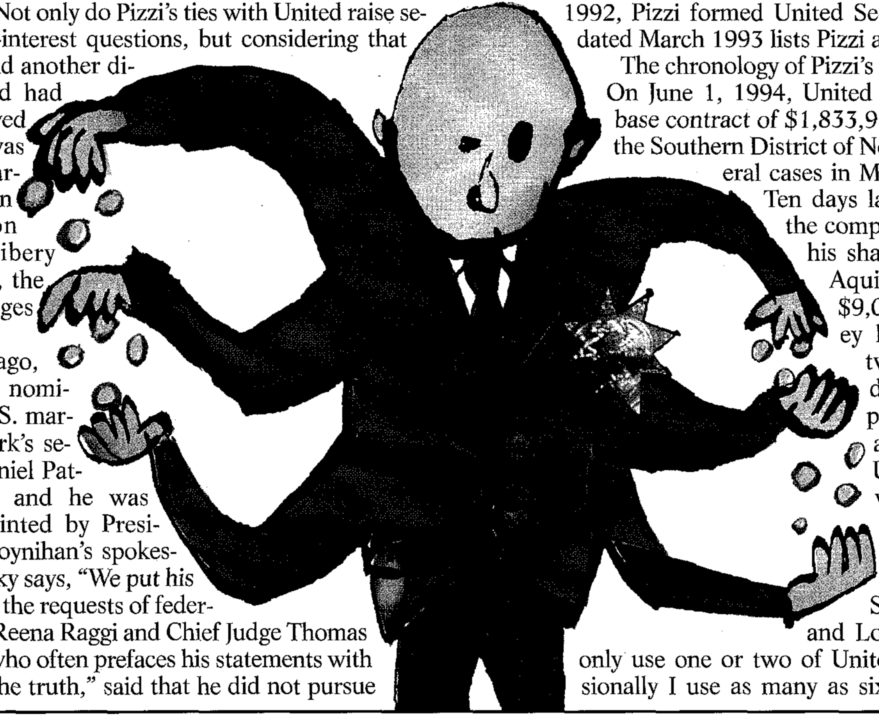

Illustration by Scott Menchin.

sources insist that in fact, Pizzi uses 20 to 30 United Security guards daily, which is more in line with the size of the contract. Pizzi's office uses United guards not only as prison escorts in federal courthouses and hospitals but to stand watch over properties that are part of the $100 million in assets that have been seized by the government in his district.

Papers filed by a former intermittent deputy, James Surdo, who is appealing his recent termination to the U.S. Merit Protection Board, show how Pizzi worked his scheme. Surdo had performed security work for the government since 1977 and for the Marshals Service exclusively since 1991 until last September, when he and three of his co-workers were laid off. Surdo alleged that "U.S. Marshal Pizzi, in the presence of other deputies, stated that he could, if he wanted to, continue to place us on the U.S. Marshals' payroll. But, that he had another agenda and chose not to do so." That agenda, Surdo claims, was to increase United's payroll at the expense of the government. United Security offered Surdo $12.27 an hour. In essence, the government fired a trusted employee whom it was paying a total of $16.48 an hour (without pension or other benefits), only to pay a private company $19.89 an hour and up for those same services—of which the employee received only $12.27 an hour.

By what process exactly was United Security awarded such contracts? U.S. Marshals Service spokesman Bill Licatovich explains: "Marshal Pizzi's chief deputy and two other people review all the proposals and send to Washington their recommendation of the best three companies they have decided upon. The contract is not based on the lowest bid but on the overall evaluation of the local marshal's office." Licatovich defended the decision by saying, "Our counsel investigated the matter and found no conflict of interest."

In the meantime, the overall Marshals Service budget for salaries has swollen from $348 million in 1994 to a projected $463 million for 1996. Justice Department spokesman Burt Brandenburg acknowledges that the government's plan to use private contractors to furnish guards has gone awry "because of the high costs in large cities such as New York." However, he added, "the program can be reviewed as we review all our programs, and it can be changed."

But by that time, Pizzi's patriotism may fizzle. Deputy marshals who work under Pizzi in Brooklyn, speaking on the condition of anonymity, say that Pizzi has made no secret of the fact that he eventually plans to retire from government and return to United Security. Pizzi himself will say only, "I'm considering it." ■

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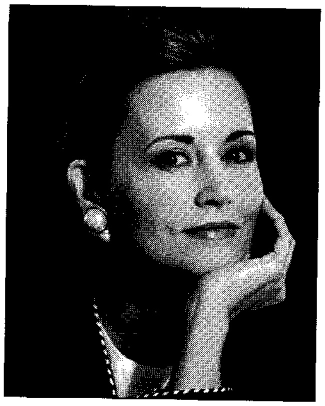

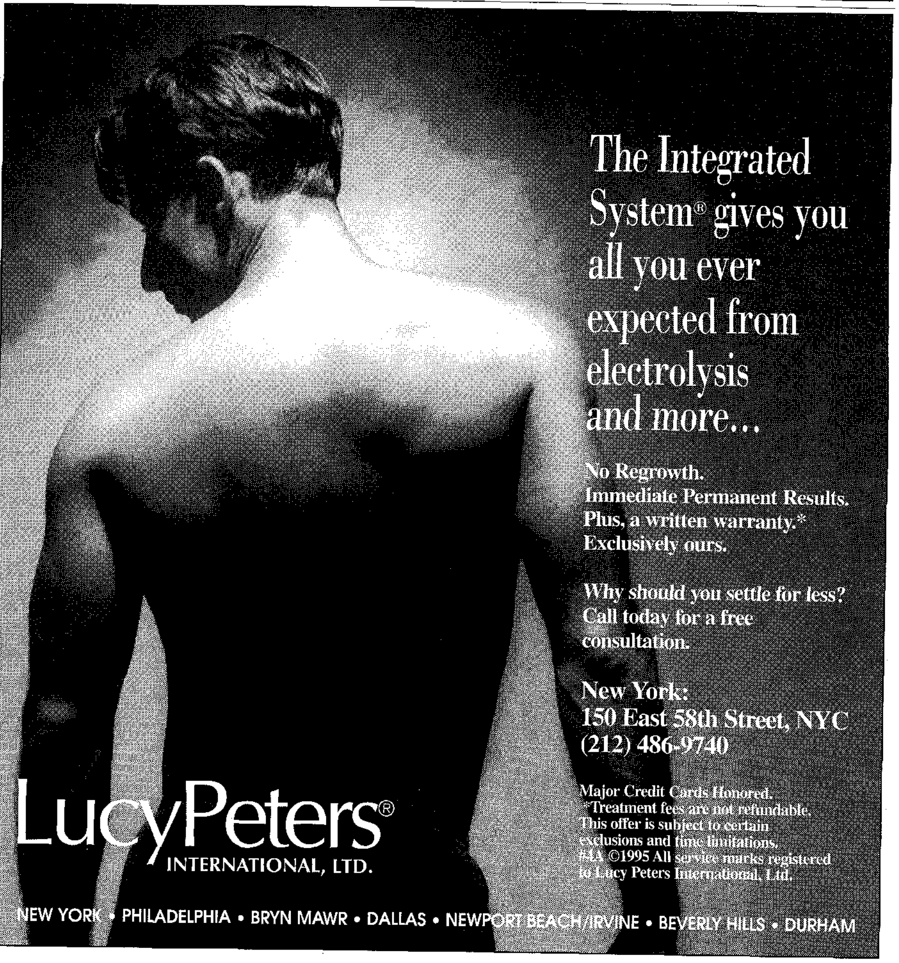

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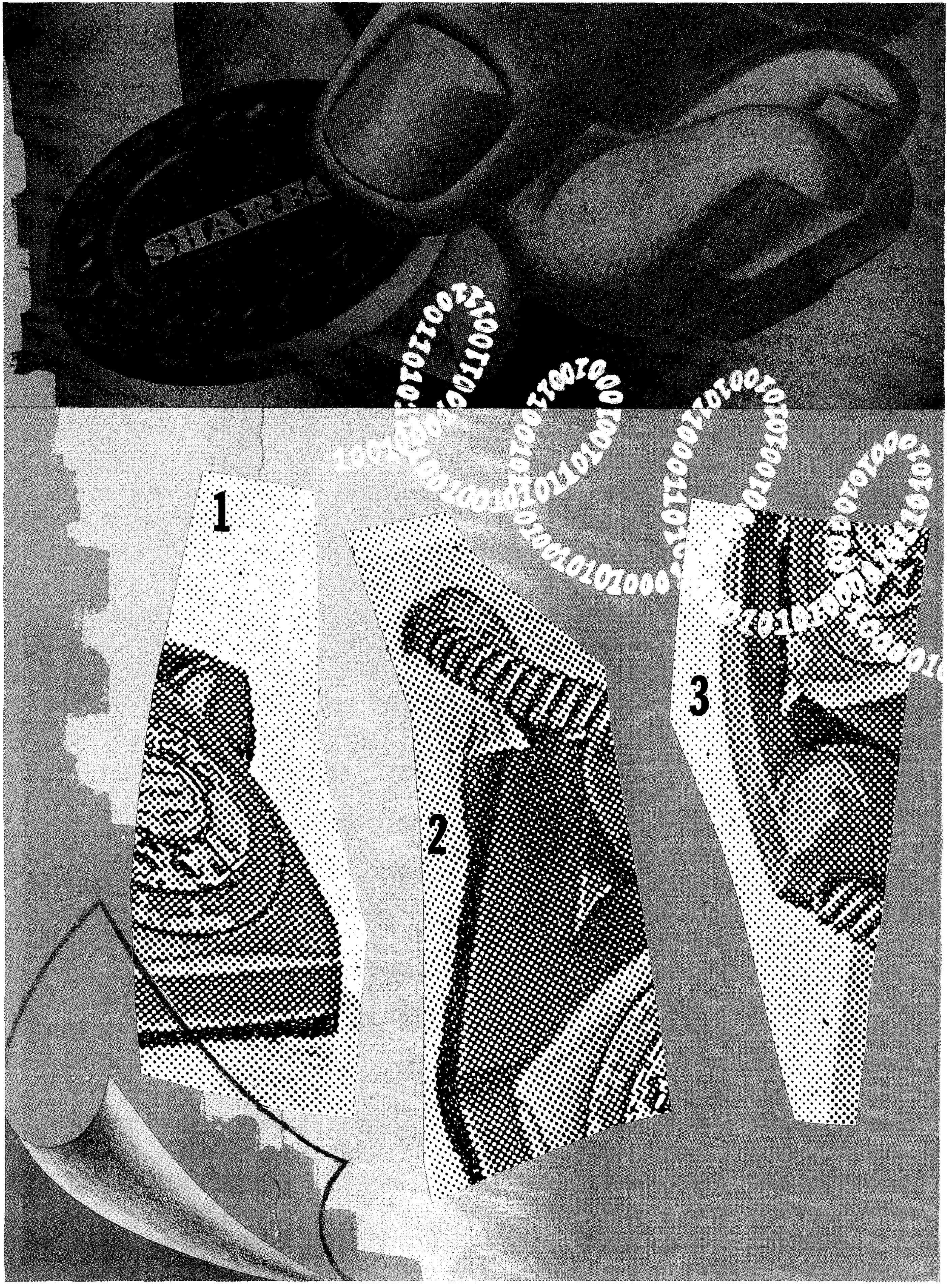


ILLUSTRATION BY GENE GREIF
FOR NEW YORK

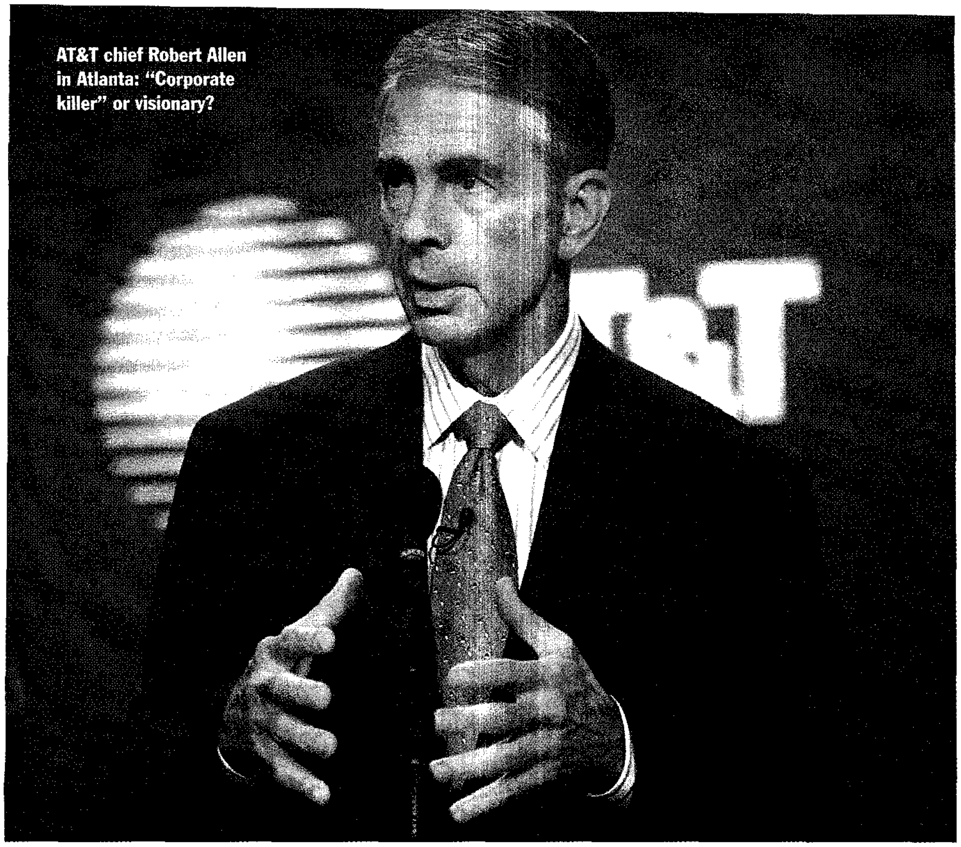
DOES AT&T KNOW WHAT IT'S DOING?

AFTER THE CONTROVERSIAL LAYOFFS, THE DARING THREE-WAY BREAKUP, AND THE BOLD BID FOR INTERNET SUPREMACY, THE NEWLY SVELTE MA BELL SAYS IT'S READY TO RULE THE TECHNO-FUTURE. BUT A CLOSE LOOK AT THE COMPANY'S MASTER PLAN SUGGESTS IT MAY BE SUFFERING FROM A GRAND DELUSION.

BY DAVID S. BENNAHUM

"One month ago today," Robert Allen told the crowd in Atlanta's Symphony Hall late last year, "AT&T faced the cameras and announced our plan to split into three stand-alone, publicly traded global companies.

"I've had a grand time with the press since then, partly because—I confess—I enjoy seeing the effect on people who had voted AT&T least likely to stun the world with a radical restructuring plan." For Allen, AT&T's CEO since 1988 and a man who has endured criti-



AT&T chief Robert Allen in Atlanta: "Corporate killer" or visionary?

cism that he has missed every major technological advance of the past few years, it must have been nice to be hailed as a visionary. "This is the best possible gift we could give our customers, our share owners, and the new companies themselves," Allen explained to his audience. "We're turning three companies free to compete in the principal markets of the Information Age."

Allen, surrounded by a grab bag of cyber luminaries from MIT, Silicon Graphics, and *HotWired,* was in town to unveil a communications network designed for this summer's Olympics, and to explain how AT&T would flush the wired world out from the enclave of today's hobbyists, hackers, and curiosity seekers and into the homes of everyday Americans. Some 90 million AT&T customers were potential converts to the new world of digital communications, and only AT&T, Allen plausibly argued, had the name recognition and public confidence to turn a curiosity like the Internet into a medium as simple and easy to use as the telephone.

"Now the world is ready to jump into cyberspace," Allen said. "Whether the rich, interactive marketplace that has created—and been created by—800 service will translate to the online environment is largely up to people like all of us. We'll also have much to say about whether the worlds of education, medicine, and art are permanently transformed by technology or merely distracted temporarily."

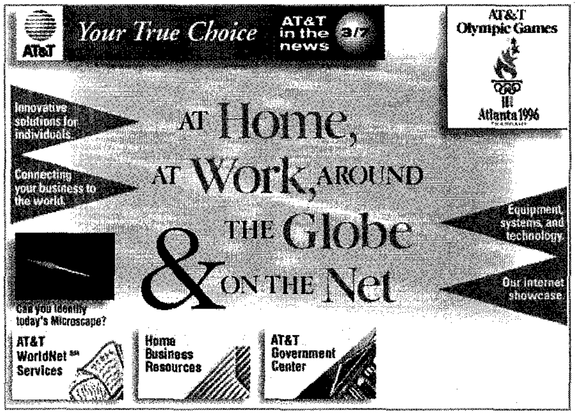
Some weeks later, the 303,000 people working for AT&T received a less cheery missive. "To put in place the organization designs of the new services and communications systems and technology companies, about 40,000 people will leave over the next three years," Allen wrote. The January announcement, as presidential campaign watchers know, set off the ongoing anti-corporate backlash, and Allen was excoriated, most memorably in a recent cover story in *Newsweek,* as a "Corporate Killer" who hacked heads to please rapacious Wall Street investors. AT&T boosters, meanwhile, continue to insist that the company has embarked on a path of almost unprecedented boldness that only Luddites and populist demagogues could oppose.

"[AT&T's breakup] is the largest deal that has ever been done," says an enthusiastic Jeff Williams, a Morgan Stanley managing director who heads its global telecommunications practice and was brought in by Allen to engineer AT&T's three-way breakup. "Importantly, I think it is confirmation of what investors have been saying they wanted managements to do. Confirmation that management is doing what shareholders wanted them to do, which is first, last, and always about the value of the shares. And not to hold companies together in order to keep these great castles in the sky." Williams considers the trifurcation of AT&T to be a watershed moment in American corporate history, ratifying a devolutionary trend that began last year when ITT broke itself up and gained speed with General Motors's spin-off of its Electronic Data Systems subsidiary. "It's just happening every place," Williams says, "and I think it is pretty spectacular."

Williams is now structuring the initial public offering that will turn AT&T's equipment division into a stand-alone company, based in Murray Hill, New Jersey. This company is often referred to by people at AT&T as "Company Two." The rump AT&T is "Company One," and the third spinoff will be a computer manufacturing company called NCR Corp., whose purview closely tracks that of the old NCR before it was gobbled up by AT&T five years ago. The whole incredibly complicated multistage process is expected to be complete by the end of this year.

Aside from sentimentalists, no one would gainsay the fact that AT&T was bloated and at risk of irrelevance if it did not act soon. But interestingly, amid all the back-and-forth about the conflicting needs of workers and shareholders, little attention has been paid to a central question: Does AT&T have a firm grip on this techno-future? The answer is probably not. Interviews with dozens of AT&T insiders, and an examination of many as yet unpublicized details of the restructuring, suggest that the company may in fact be flying blind—that the boldest restructuring in recent corporate history could also turn out to be AT&T's grandest delusion.

IT'S EASY TO SEE WHY AT&T BELIEVED it was in need of such a fundamental corrective. AT&T's 1991 purchase of computer-maker NCR—for a whopping $7.5 billion—was a dud. (NCR lost close to $600 million for AT&T last year, not counting a $1.6 billion "restructuring charge.") Congress was continuing, after more than three years of debate, to postpone its final decision on reforming America's telecommunications industry, all the while sowing uncertainty over which way the legislation would settle. Wall Street responded by letting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Shiny happy future: AT&T's World Wide Web home page.

Photograph by Andrew Lichtenstein/JB Pictures.

AT&T's stock drift.

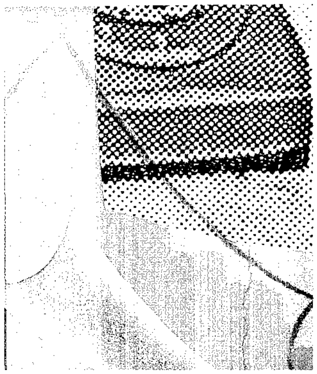
On top of all this, Allen was spending a lot of time mediating internal turf wars. AT&T sells both telephone equipment and services, and companies like MCI and Sprint were leery of paying one side of AT&T for equipment while the other side competed with them in selling long distance; this conflict was depressing equipment sales. "We viewed the breakup of AT&T as something inevitable," says Fred Fromm, CEO of equipment-sales competitor Siemens Stromberg-Carlson. "In trying to play all sides of the business, they kept running into conflicts. [Phone] companies would not buy their equipment."

Adding to AT&T's nervousness last year was the prospect of a huge structural transformation in the telephone business (one since hastened by the signing of the telecommunications bill last month). With regulatory blocks removed and advances in digital technology allowing all forms of transmission (voice, data, visual) to travel over any number of networks (phone systems, wireless, the Internet), it is likely that the cost of long-distance communications—which accounts for 60 percent of AT&T's profits—will plummet, sweeping the company's healthy margins along with it.

Last March, Allen made a decision. AT&T, in its present form, wasn't up to the challenges ahead. Allen told the board of directors that he was considering splitting up the company. To investigate further, Allen began meeting secretly with a group of seven men, including two senior executives: Martin Lipton, the legendary mergers-and-acquisitions attorney at Wachtell Lipton Rosen & Katz; and Morgan Stanley's Williams. They were soon joined by Bob Allen's apparent heir-designate, Alex Mandl. Mandl, 52, is expected to take over as CEO of the rump AT&T when Allen steps down. He's described as brash and flamboyant, someone who does not come from the old "Bellhead" mold. Allen reportedly sees in Mandl someone willing to fundamentally rethink ingrained corporate strategies.

Mandl is certainly not short on the vision thing; he's even coined his own Tofflleresque catchall for the next phase of human evolution: the Age of Interaction. Mandl has laid out what he sees as AT&T's opportunity to pioneer the new world of communications, re-creating in the twenty-first century the dominant AT&T of yore—a company that, instead of controlling copper wires, will control the operating system of a future worldwide telecom network.

Over the summer, while others in Allen's circle were looking at how to take apart the old AT&T, Mandl was looking at how to construct the new one. By September, he had produced a document he ambitiously called "Target: Growth 2005, Creating a New Future." The "Target" document, obtained by *New York*, is a kind of primer for AT&T supervisors, detailing what technological change means for their future.



AT&T MAY BE FLYING BLIND—THE BOLDEST RESTRUCTURING IN RECENT CORPORATE HISTORY COULD TURN OUT TO BE ONE OF THE MOST MISGUIDED.

As approved by AT&T's board of directors, Mandl's vision is about as far away from telephony, short of changing industries, that AT&T can go—"a long distance from long distance" is his catchphrase. The real opportunity for AT&T, Mandl predicts, will come from a whole new kind of communications technology, one that owes more to Netscape's Mark Andreessen than to Alexander Graham Bell.

Just as Netscape acquired 75 percent of the Web-browser market in the last year by giving its flagship product away free, AT&T hopes to do the same with Internet access by undercutting established Internet service providers, gobbling up market share in the process. Two weeks ago AT&T jolted the online industry by announcing it intends to give its long-distance customers five free hours of Internet access a month, or unlimited access for $19.95. Within days, America Online's stock plummeted 20 percent and pure service providers' shares by even more, as analysts anticipated a price war, with AT&T the presumptive victor. By dumping low-cost Internet access onto the market, AT&T, with its trusted name and reputation for service, was making good on its promise, as Allen put it, to "bring the Internet to everyone."

Here's AT&T's logic: Telephony will soon become indistinguishable from all other kinds of digital information. In this new world, the telephone call will be replaced by what AT&T calls "the multimedia call." Along with voices, the network, which Mandl believes will run over parts of both AT&T's existing phone network and the Internet, will carry images, information, and financial transactions. By 2005, Mandl wants the streamlined AT&T to generate at least half its revenue from businesses unrelated to long-distance phone calls. Given that long distance will account for an even greater proportion of AT&T's revenues after this year's spinoffs, that's a remarkable transformation.

While AT&T deserves credit for recognizing the inevitability of the move toward a new, multimedia communications system, and for looking unblinkingly at the inevitable dwindling of its core business (long-distance phone service), "Growth 2005" reveals a plan that may actually do more harm than good. This is in part symptomatic of the industry itself. In the fast-changing world of telecommunications, Mandl explains to his supervisors, "no one honestly knows what the future will look like." Nevertheless, in the face of all this uncertainty, Mandl is placing all bets on one number—and there's good reason to believe this bet won't pay off.

In Mandl's world, AT&T should strive to become what Microsoft is to the personal-computer industry—owner of the operating system that will govern digital transactions. "This network operating system," Mandl writes, "will be to the information and communications industry what MS-DOS is to the personal computer business." Everything in Mandl's plan builds on this move. By controlling the system that operates this worldwide computer network, he believes, AT&T will by extension control the network itself and grow once again into *the* dominant global communications company.

While this makes sense—who wouldn't want to lord over all the world's communications?—it flies in the face of what people already know about computer networks and free markets. There is an existing worldwide network today, the Internet, whose success is based on the fact that no one owns it. So, in the unlikely event that AT&T manages to monopolize the Internet service-provider market, it's doubtful this will translate into control of all online standards. The Internet is destined to remain a neutral, relatively level playing field. Still, using the Trojan Horse of supercheap Internet access, AT&T thinks it will eventually subdue this chaot-

Illustration by Gene Greif.

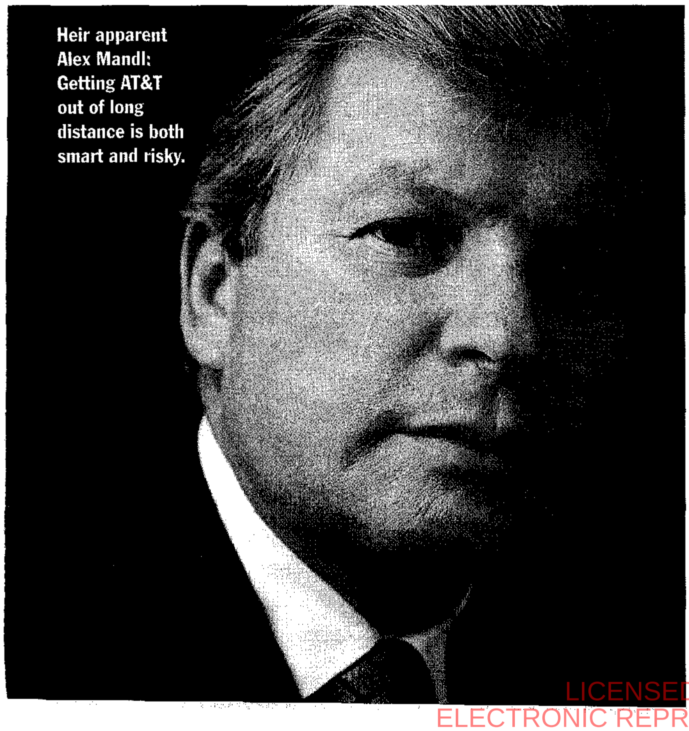
ic market and turn it into a nice, lucrative hierarchy, with a benevolent AT&T setting standards on top, à la Bill Gates.

AT&T, tellingly, has been burned by the Internet before. In the early nineties, it set out to create a suite of proprietary, members-only computer networks, with names like PersonaLink, Interchange, and ImagiNation. Each had a different mission, targeting a specific demographic—but in the end, they all failed to produce, contributing in part to a $1.1 billion pretax charge against earnings announced in January. They were sideswiped by the rapid bottom-line-destroying growth of the free-form, all-comers-welcome Internet. Last spring, AT&T finally recognized the supremacy of the non-proprietary Internet model and completely changed strategy, according to Gordon Bridge. Bridge, who left AT&T last November to become president of Connect, Inc., a Silicon Valley start-up, was responsible for devising online strategy for AT&T. He helped create these failed proprietary networks and then, when the tide turned, devised training sessions in the spring of last year to teach senior management about the Internet.

"A few years ago, AT&T saw the Internet as a threat, not an opportunity," Bridge tells me. But by last year, Bridge says, "the Internet phenomenon was growing at a terrific rate, and AT&T was going to decide if it could be a leader in this market."

Mandl, who refused to discuss the details of this Gatesian strategy, faces two options. He can try to seduce the Internet into accepting AT&T standards, or he can build his own version of the Internet, which, while theoretically possible, would be absurdly expensive and risky. Both options share the same monopolistic approach to the future, and both are long shots.

IN THE NEW WORLD OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS, HEIR-APPARENT MANDL EXPLAINS TO HIS BOSSES, "NO ONE HONESTLY KNOWS WHAT THE FUTURE WILL LOOK LIKE."


Heir apparent Alex Mandl: Getting AT&T out of long distance is both smart and risky.

Then there's yet another potential quagmire. In Bell Labs, AT&T has an extraordinary hacker-intensive research arm with the ability to build the physical infrastructure of wires, switches, and hubs of a future worldwide information network—essential resources AT&T needs to achieve global dominance. So why is AT&T turning its most crucial asset into a spun-off competitor?

JUST AS AT&T'S BASKING Ridge headquarters has its Golden Boy—a monumental gold-plated manchild holding phone cable in one hand and bolts of lightning in the other—Bell Labs has its transistor. A 60-foot steel replica of a transistor, invented at Bell Labs in 1947, greets visitors to the mammoth Homedale office. Designed by Eero Saarinen, the Finnish-born architect who created the TWA terminal at Kennedy, the Homedale building has only one office with a window—the president's. Everyone else is supposed to be focusing on research, like monks. For the past two years, Bell Labs has been developing all sorts of futuristic interactive multimedia ideas. When I visited last spring, I was shown projects devoted to delivering movies on demand, navigating through software by moving your hands in the air, and "virtual reality"–type teleconferencing through computer networks. Funded with an additional $2.1 billion in cash last year and stocked with well-paid scientists, Bell Labs is a throwback to the great late-industrial age of research and development. This tradition superbly positions Company Two for the future.

Company Two will inherit most of Bell Labs, which means, sources tell *New York,* that after the breakup, about three quarters of Bell Labs' scientists will join the spinoff Company Two. Bell Labs, which holds more than 25,000 patents, about one for every day of its existence (it was founded in 1925), is credited with all sorts of Internet mainstays, including the Unix operating system, and pioneering work on "packet switching," the technology that lets information travel through networks without central control.

In the seventies, scientists at Bell Labs contributed to the creation of packet technology, and in the next decade, this innovation should lead to a remarkable drop in the price of long-distance calls. Already, upstart companies like International Discount Telecommunications (known as IDT) and VocalTec offer a primitive version of "Net-phones"—software that lets you make virtually free long-distance calls through the Internet. Under fully deregulated digitization, you could theoretically phone Hong Kong through Time Warner's cable system or even Con Edison's electricity grid for mere pennies.

How this scenario will develop is helpfully laid out in yet another internal AT&T document, this one with the marginally less far-reaching title of "Vision 2000." The document, provided to *New York* by sources at AT&T, was written last October by members of an AT&T telecom division set to join Company Two. It documents a future similar to the one outlined in Mandl's "Growth 2005": We will become a "virtual society," "Vision 2000" predicts, and "what will make this possible is one network of many choices . . . a vast and comprehensive multimedia infrastructure." Like Mandl, Company Two sees everything consolidating into one global matrix.

A senior scientist at Bell Labs, speaking on condition of anonymity, sees competition as inevitable in this new environment. "I think Company Two is going to do everything," he tells me. "Company Two can write software and make new hardware to do this packet telephony, or interface between old telephony and packet telephony." This hints at the conundrum AT&T finds itself in. The new AT&T—Company One—is supposed to sell service; Company Two is supposed to sell hardware. But everyone agrees that within the next decade or so, this neat distinction will be obliterated. And Company Two will be in a perfect position to take down its former corporate parent.

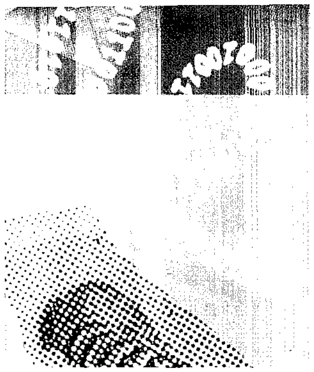
Photograph by Chris Sanders/Outline.

WHEN I FIRST MET DORÉE Seligmann last spring, she was the proud owner of a new Silicon Graphics Onyx. Costing about $350,000, the Onyx is dedicated to one thing only: drawing pictures. Much as Apple came to be vaguely identified with the hacker counterculture for a while, Silicon Graphics has built a reputation as the computer company for artists, mostly special-effects designers in film and television. So it was a bit odd to see the bright-purple Onyx sitting in a Bell Labs workstation. Seligmann, a former theater producer (and grandniece of dancer Isadora Duncan), holds a Ph.D. in computer science and a mandate from AT&T to design the multimedia metaphors of the future. She was recruited by Bell Labs to develop a vocabulary of intuitive, easy-to-use icons—like Apple's trash can and "happy Mac"—that will humanize multimedia communication. Seligmann and her team of hacker researchers will now be working for Company Two.

Her strategy is to give the vacuum of cyberspace a feeling of context. Communications, using Seligmann's metaphors, take place within the image of a conference room that appears on your computer screen. In the center of the room is a table, around which sit "avatars," or virtual representations of the people taking part in the conversation (typically, this idea comes from a work of science fiction, Neal Stephenson's 1992 *Snow Crash*). Avatars look like people and can be designed to resemble you and your colleagues. In the demonstration I saw, Seligmann's avatar had a meeting with another programmer. A blue square in the center of the table filled with whatever images were being passed between them: text, numbers from a spreadsheet, video, and so on. They spoke through regular telephone lines, and the system altered the angle of the sound to reflect the avatars' seating positions at the table.

Seligmann wants to take this prototype and put it on the Internet, allowing people to build virtual offices and avatars, in which meetings and information can be exchanged. People who regularly work together but are separated by geography can then create a simulated office building, with private offices next to one another. This is exactly the kind of innovative technology that excites Mandl, and Company Two (which Mandl won't control) has piles of it lying around Bell Labs.

Perhaps it's unfair to expect AT&T, or any company for that matter, to deftly position itself for an unknowable future. AT&T is staring at a global marketplace so complex and unpredictable that short-term strategy must outweigh the long-term. This is an argument made by Secretary of Labor Robert Reich, who has publicly criticized AT&T for its wholesale layoffs. Reich tells me that AT&T and its employees are victims of a new corporate order, Electronic Capitalism, ruled by electronic trading networks that never shut down and in which nations surrender economic control by outbidding one another to lower barriers to trade. It's a world, he says, where "economic policy is determined by bond traders and investment capital moving around the world." This means that 40,000 AT&T employees may be fired for a strategic reason that, in retrospect, could turn out to be hopelessly deluded. But how can AT&T be expected to plan ahead in such an environment? Reich doesn't think it can; instead, he thinks the whole system has to be reevaluated. He says rather bleakly that "ultimately we have to decide whether we are no more than an economy sharing a common currency in which the primary social glue binding us together is business transactions we do with one another, or if we are still a society in which we have special obligations to one another as citizens."



MA BELL HAS THE RESOURCES AND THE RESEARCH KNOW-HOW TO BUILD THE WORLDWIDE INFORMATION NETWORK OF THE FUTURE. SO WHY IS AT&T GIVING THESE ASSETS UP?

IN FEBRUARY, COMPANY TWO FINALLY GOT A name, Lucent Technologies, in anticipation of an IPO this month. In a private celebratory meeting, several hundred Lucent employees gathered to hear their new CEO, Henry Schacht, pitch them on why the new name was good. (*Lucent* is an adjective meaning "shining, bright.") Other Lucent employees joined in by video, as the whole thing was broadcast live through AT&T's in-house satellite network. Schacht, 61, the former chairman of Cummins Engine Co., the world's leading manufacturer of diesel engines, has been on AT&T's board since 1981. He and the rest of the board have little to show for their tenure: Since AT&T's first breakup, after all the write-offs and all the fumbled plans, AT&T has accumulated a relatively anemic $14.5 billion in cumulative profits, far underperforming, as *Fortune* pointed out recently, General Electric, a comparable behemoth that showed profits of $44.6 billion over the same period. Now the same board is ditching 40,000 people, rewarding one of its members with stewardship of Lucent and giving Allen a $16 million bonus. The same board also crafted a plan for the future predicated on recreating the AT&T of yore—a reconstituted monopoly for the information age.

With leaders like these, the workers at the Lucent rollout had every reason to fear the future, no matter how well positioned the aborning company appears to be. Were these workers, like their dismissed colleagues, destined to pay for yet another misguided voyage, launched with fanfare and ending stuck in the mud of downsizing, write-offs, and repositioning? Their questions turned away from the meaning of Lucent to what people really cared about: Would their retirement packages be secure at the new company?

Schacht, visibly flustered, tried to calm everyone down. Amid the balloons and unfurled flags bearing the Lucent logo ("a bold, red, hand-drawn circle dubbed the 'innovation ring,'" according to the Lucent P.R. department), the atmosphere bore little resemblance to the celebratory mood of Bob Allen's speech four months earlier in Atlanta.

Back then, before the bad press set in, before the onset of a Buchanan populist campaign, most people trusted that Allen knew what he was doing by breaking up AT&T; that this time would be different, and that the firings of 40,000 people, while painful in the short term, would translate into a better future—a move, as Allen had said in Atlanta, "completely consistent with what AT&T has said we were doing all along, and that is listening to our customers and listening to our share owners.

"Call me old-fashioned," Allen had concluded, "but I think that should count for something." ■

David S. Bennahum can be reached at davidsol@panix.com.

Illustration by Gene Greif.

Queen Cassandra

A new lady, Cassandra Wilson, sings the blues—and sells records.

By Chris Norris

“WOULD YOU LIKE ONE?” GAZING UP FROM HEAVY LIDS, CASSANDRA WILSON proffers a slim, brown Nat Sherman cigarette. “They’re natural,” she says. “Don’t have any additives.” In a long white chemise, golden dreads, and luminous caramel skin, Wilson defines casual elegance—the jazz diva in repose—despite the fact she’s just endured the L.A. red-eye, has yet to go food shopping for her 6-year-old, and appears to be seriously extolling the salubrious properties of certain tobaccos.

“Well, I don’t know many singers who *don’t* smoke,” she insists, laughing. “And in jazz, I mean, it’s part of the nightclub ritual. You have to call the spirits. A nightclub doesn’t make *sense* if you can’t smoke.”

Notice they don’t call it a *health* club.

“Yeah,” she says. “*Hello.*”

Clearly, Wilson is not one for morbid obsessions. Here in her Harlem studio—adjacent to the apartment she’s occupied for six years—the singer is a striking combination of bohemian sophistication and down-home ease. Her husky contralto, which the New York *Times* called “one of the most voluptuous voices in jazz,” breaks easily into a throaty laugh, and the only sign of frayed nerves is the quick workout she’s giving her rocking chair.

Probably jazz’s most sensual and fearless vocalist, Wilson is all about human pleasures, even if they’re dangerous. She knows a good cigarette when she smokes one. And what’s more, she’ll make you want one, too.

On her 1994 record *Blue Light ’Til Dawn* (Blue Note), Wilson, who was already among the most accomplished jazz singers of her generation, became something more. With hushed, aching treatments of Robert Johnson nocturnes and Joni Mitchell lullabies, *Blue Light* is the sort of transcendent experience that jazz singing hasn’t really offered since the days of Billie Holiday. An atmospheric masterpiece of sultry, moody romance, the record broke jazz and pop boundaries, reaching back in time to find a quiet, intimate space that seemed to prefigure both—and selling over 250,000 copies.

The title referred to a certain time of night. “At a party, you have a blue light to have a certain vibe,” she explains. “The title refers to that light, that blue, giving way to the dawn. It’s *after* after hours, the predawn twilight.” As befits this eerie, ambivalent time, Wilson’s long, searching lines recall the suspenseful pantomime of Miles Davis and occasionally, as on Johnson’s “Hellhound on My Trail,” stir a deep, lurking dread.

Now, though, Wilson’s sitting in the cold light of a February morning, a few weeks before the release of *Blue Light*’s follow-up, *New Moon Daughter* (Blue Note).

The red shag carpet of this workspace is stained with coffee and cigarettes. A cigar box sits on top of a slightly battered, walnut-colored piano. Next to it is a faded black-and-white photo: a smiling collection of jazz musicians, among them bassist Herman Fowlkes, Wilson’s father, who died during the recording of *Blue Light*. “The title *New Moon Daughter* comes from an Ashanti proverb,” Wilson explains. “Sickness comes with the waning moon, the new moon cures disease.” Here on the very top of Sugar Hill, Wilson seems to be enjoying a new moon.

“It’s a different life up here,” she says of her neighborhood. “A different pace. There’s more space in the sky. People always say, ‘Oh, I never go above 96th Street. But I almost never go below it.”

Her window looks out over the Harlem River and on to Yankee Stadium. It’s a long way from her native Jackson, Mississippi, where hometown gigs with her dad led her to the brainy, futuristic jazz of Brooklyn’s M-BASE collective and finally—nine albums and two marriages later—to today’s sanctuary, a neighborhood once claimed by Duke Ellington, Joe Louis, and Paul Robeson. Harlem, endpoint to the classic jazz migration, is what Ralph Ellison called “the scene of the folk-Negro’s death agony, [but] also the setting of his transcendence.” For Wilson, it’s the next-best thing to home.

“Down South, when someone doesn’t do what they call *speak*, like on the street or at the store, they’re not well bred,” Wilson says. “Not to acknowledge another human being passing you—it’s the most basic thing in the world. Here people do that. They speak.”

The soft folksiness Wilson cherishes from Jackson—a place where neighbors kept chickens and her grandmother always had a garden—is deeply present in *New Moon Daughter*. With a spare, acoustic ambience reminiscent of *Blue Light*, Wilson sings both Billie Holiday’s “Strange Fruit” and Hank Williams’s “I’m So Lonesome I Could Cry.” She even turns the Monkees’ “Last Train to Clarksville” into a wistful, shuffling dance. The album was recorded in Turtle Creek Barn, “an actual barn, with a loft and beds and everything. Those peepers on [Neil Young’s] ‘Harvest Moon’ are real.”

This seductive simplicity may seem antithetical to the angular lines she sang with saxophonist Steve Coleman. Sometimes, though, we go back to go forward. Once a daredevil of the avant-garde, Wilson is drawing on the very fundamentals of black-music expression, which is in itself a classic avant-garde gesture.

“I don’t know if it’s because of the pain associated with it, or the conditions,” says Wilson, leaning back in her chair. “But the black middle class often attaches a stigma to the blues. Jazz musicians too: A lot of them are afraid of the blues.” The blues—what fellow Harlemite Albert Murray calls “a fundamental device for . . . existential affirmation”—seems, like decent neighbors or space in the sky, crucial to Wilson’s peace.

So does poetry. Like her most obvious forebear, Abbey Lincoln, she writes many of her own lyrics, including five of the songs on *New Moon Daughter*. I ask her to name some favorite poets. “I read a lot, but it’s a hodgepodge. I just have certain poems I like. Like that one, ‘The world is too much with us; late and soon.’ I love that poem.”

Her eyes rove over the objects in the room. A DAT player, a stereo. CDs by Ornette Coleman and Horace Silver, Bruce Springsteen and the Roots. Her son’s Super Nintendo sits near a guitar. A stack of unopened mail lies on the sofa. Wordsworth’s next lines hang in the air. “Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers: / Little we see in Nature that is ours.” ■

PHOTOGRAPHED BY DANNY CLINCH
FOR NEW YORK

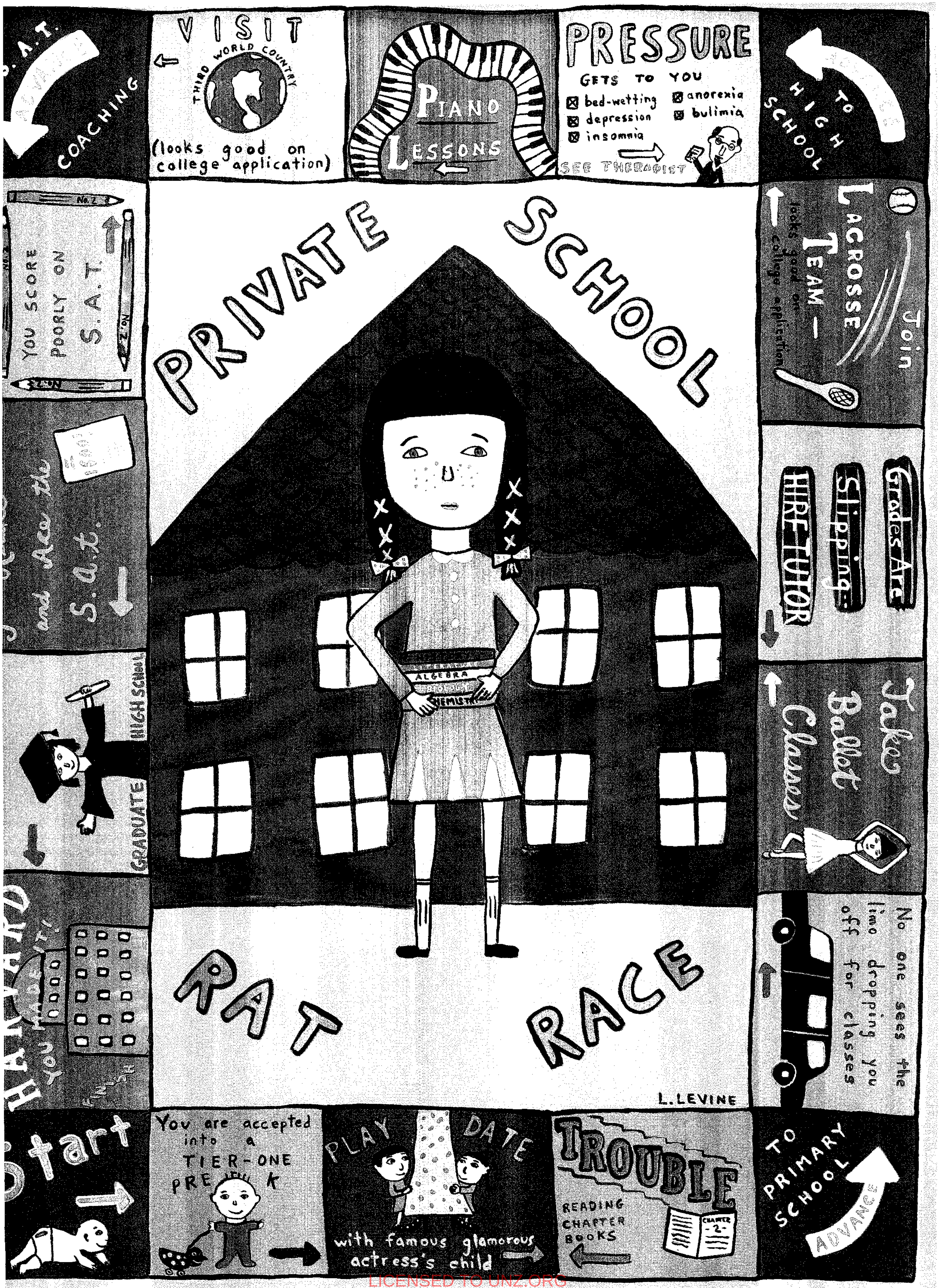
At New York's elite private schools, the obsessive scramble to get into an Ivy League college is getting increasingly desperate, sending hysterical ripples down into nursery schools. If these kids are this obsessed now, what kind of grown-ups will they be? By Ralph Gardner Jr.

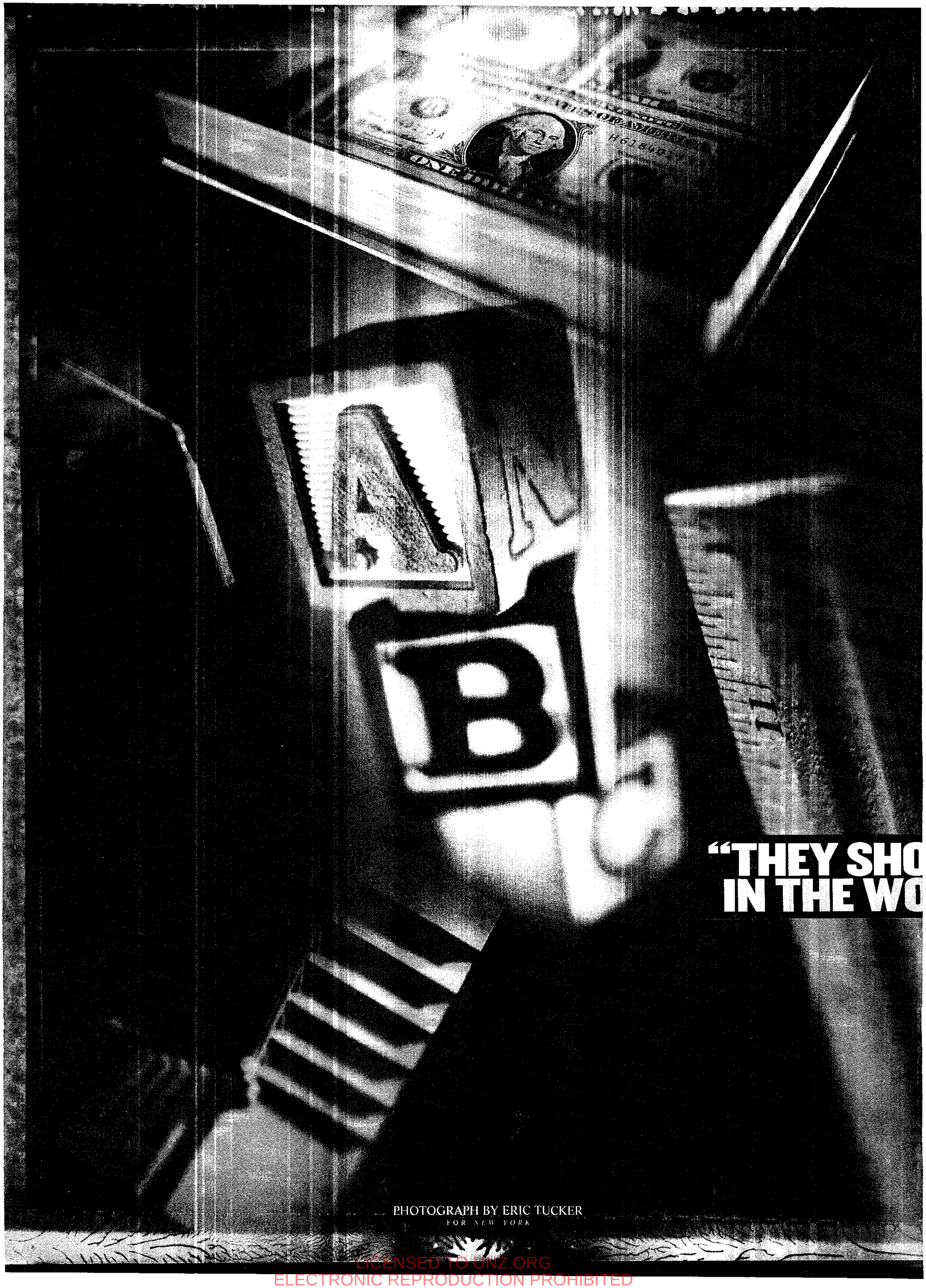
POOR LITTLE SMART KIDS

HARVARD, WHICH NOW, PERHAPS, ASPIRES TO BE known as America's friendliest university as well as its most prestigious, has a phone number that applying high-school students can call to find out whether they've been accepted or rejected. On December 11, the day the Class of 2000's early acceptances were announced, seniors at the Horace Mann School—which routinely gets more of its kids into Harvard than any other private school in the city—lined up at the phone in the school's publications room to discover their destiny.

"Here were these wonderfully bright and hopeful people who had never been denied anything in their life," said Andrew Collin, an English instructor who slipped into the room to watch the unfolding drama. "They got an operator, a secretary,

ILLUSTRATION BY LAURA LEVINE
FOR *NEW YORK*


PRIVATE SCHOOL
RAT RACE
L. LEVINE
S.A.T. COACHING
ADVANCE
VISIT THIRD WORLD COUNTRY
(looks good on college application)
PIANO LESSONS
PRESSURE GETS TO YOU
☒ bed-wetting
☒ depression
☒ insomnia
☒ anorexia
☒ bulimia
SEE THERAPIST
ADVANCE TO HIGH SCHOOL
Join LACROSSE TEAM – looks good on college application
Grades Are Slipping: HIRE TUTOR
Take Ballet Classes
No one sees the limo dropping you off for classes
ADVANCE TO PRIMARY SCHOOL
TROUBLE READING CHAPTER BOOKS
CHAPTER 2
PLAY DATE with famous glamorous actress's child
You are accepted into a TIER-ONE PRE-K
Start
HARVARD
YOU MADE IT!
FINISH
GRADUATE HIGH SCHOOL
and Ace the S.A.T.
1600
YOU SCORE POORLY ON S.A.T.
No. 2
ALGEBRA
BIOLOGY
CHEMISTRY



“THEY SHO
IN THE WO

PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIC TUCKER
FOR *NEW YORK*

and someone who had a folder on their desk—you could literally see this on their expressions."

Unfortunately, New York City private schools are no longer quite the pipelines into the Ivy League they once were. "I was sitting there watching everything and thinking, Next year is going to be horrible," said Dimi Kasimis, a junior, as a senior with perfect 1600 SATs got shot down. "All the color drained out of his face. It was like the life had been sucked out of him."

When it was over, Harvard had accepted about 9 Horace Mann seniors (the numbers are confidential) and rejected or deferred 7 out of a graduating class of 150. Screams of joy could be heard in the hallways from the winners, who were gracious in victory, comforting the losers as they sucked back their tears. The next day, the exultant mother of the student-body president arrived at a Parents' Association meeting wearing a baseball cap with the words HARVARD MOM.

JUN YONG UM DIDN'T JOIN THE LINE TO CALL HARVARD. OUT OF A SELF-preservation instinct, he hadn't even told most of his classmates that he was applying. "You view people as competition once you find out they're applying to the same school, and you start looking at them in terms of their extracurriculars and their grades," the Horace Mann senior explained. "I didn't want people looking at me feeling hateful."

Jun understandably found it hard to concentrate on schoolwork for the rest of the day, knowing that he'd call Harvard as soon as he got home. So he decided to distract himself by starting a diary. "After years of grueling battle, and planning, and failures, and unexpected successes, the armies, at least the front lines, are coming home," he wrote, with the sort of profundity that seems to peak during the senior year of high school. "Some come back garnered with glory from Harvard and Yale. Others are coming back deferred and dejected knowing they'll have to return to the battlefield to fight for what's left, and the battlefield has exhausted them so much."

More than exhausted, the grueling competition has left teenagers, at an age when their idealism and sense of opportunity should be sparkling, cynical and pessimistic about the future. Rather than rejoicing in the freedom and adventure that college promised even a decade or two ago, they're worried about what's going to happen to them after they graduate. Kids with unparalleled advantages, who attend what is arguably the best group of high schools in the United States, already suspect the deck is stacked against them. "I'm worried about getting a job, because there's always going to be someone smarter than you or better off than you," explained Alexandra Conrad, a senior at the Nightingale-Bamford School. "If you're getting anything from this process, it's that connections are key. You sit down and you say, 'Who do you know?' You try to get as many people as possible to be on your side, because you feel if you don't use your connections, someone else will."

BE ABLE TO GET HER INTO ANY INSTITUTION
," THUNDERED A DISAPPOINTED PARENT.

New York City private schools were always competitive, and admission to the Ivy League, particularly Harvard, Princeton, and Yale, has always been the gold standard. It was when I attended the Browning School, a small private boys' school on the Upper East Side, graduating in the early seventies. But it was never this gladiatorial, this dire. The reason for the fear seems to be a belief, driven as much by hysteria and superstition as hard evidence, that in a world of downsizing and cutthroat global competition, an Ivy League diploma is one's only hope for success. "People are looking to blue-chip institutions as investments for the future," explained Roger Banks, a senior Harvard and Radcliffe admissions official whose school received an astonishing 18,000 applications this year to fill the 1,600 freshman places.

And despite the odds, parents—particularly those on the Upper East and Upper West Sides of Manhattan—continue to believe that admission to an elite college is their child's birthright. This conviction seems rooted in the feeling that their offspring are especially gifted (how else to explain their admission to all the right schools thus far?) and, perhaps more to the point, that their staggering investment in their child's education—$15,000 a year in one of the city's top-tier private schools, not counting learning specialists, testers, tutors, homework helpers, personal college counselors, and often therapists—must be made to pay dividends.

"When you say, 'What about your backup?' " reported Edes Gilbert, the head of the Spence School, where my daughter is a first-grader, "they say, 'Williams and Amherst.' "

FOR MANY, THE MAD SCRAMBLE TO GET INTO THE IVY League starts in infancy, with an utterly mad scramble to get into the right nursery school. "I have had conversations with New Yorkers who have kids who are 18 months old asking what preschool should they send their child to to get on a good track for Amherst," said Jane Reynolds, Amherst's dean of admissions, who, sitting on her campus in western Massachusetts, doesn't know the difference between Episcopal, for example, and All Souls, two of the city's hottest preschools.

The official start of the college-application hysteria is sometime around December of the junior year in high school, when the high school's resident college adviser trots in many Ivy-obsessed parents and children and diplomatically suggests that they lower their expectations. "We ask the kids to look at themselves and at the schools" is how Stephen Singer, Horace Mann's director of college counseling, expressed it. "These places are so flush with smart, energetic, interesting, creative kids that there's an element of absurdity to it."

"Once you're in a school that has that reputation, you have a high expectation," admitted a Brearley mom. Her exceptional daughter has just been wait-listed at both Yale and Princeton. "We were devastated, crushed."

"They should be able to get her into any institution in the world," thundered her husband (who had also shared those sentiments with Brearley's college adviser in an angry meeting demanded by the parents to determine what went wrong).

Ironically, it may be harder to get into the Ivy League from an elite school in Manhattan than from a large public high school in the Midwest, for example, because here, everybody is applying to the same handful of colleges. "It's not unusual in one of these schools to have 35 seniors applying to Brown from a class of 100," explained Frank Leana, an independent college adviser.

TO HELP THEIR CHILD'S CHANCES, PARENTS WHO CAN AFFORD IT HIRE tutors, some charging as much as $500 an hour, to boost Junior's SAT scores, and outside college advisers, at several thousand dollars a crack, who are paid to second-guess the schools' college counselors and cast a magic spell over their teenagers' applications. Not everybody can afford these accessories. Contrary to popular myth, New York City private schools aren't solely the preserve of the rich, a sort of pedagogical Southampton. Sure, there are far more children of billionaires and movie stars and Condé Nast editors, who have their Town Cars park around the corner from school so they can walk their children the last few steps, than one finds in the general population. But there are also financial-aid kids who take the subway.

The Learning-Disability Scam

Barbara Gruen's guidance office at White Plains High School probably hasn't changed much in the nine years she's been there. There are shiny posters advertising colleges and scholarships, bold-lettered reminders of important test dates, and, of course, a seemingly endless array of manila folders. But two of those folders hold something new: lists of the approximately 100 White Plains students who this year will try to win classification as learning-disabled (LD). Many of the students are actually not mentally "challenged" in any way, but they—and their increasingly aggressive parents—will happily accept an LD classification because it can mean more time and, parents hope, better scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test. Think of it as defining disability upward.

"Parents used to fight to have their kids not labeled; now they want to know how fast they can get them tested," says Gruen. "They want that edge. They want their kids in that most competitive school. And they'll do whatever they can to make it happen."

Usually, "they" are upper-middle-class, high-achieving, "concerned" parents—for whom a Range Rover just isn't a Range Rover without a sticker from the Ivy League discreetly pasted on the rear window. While calculating mommies and daddies have been doing whatever it takes—from hiring tutors to funding libraries—for years, their drive to explore and, if possible, exploit every way of gaining an advantage has become more and more fevered as the pressure and competitiveness surrounding school and college admissions has increased.

Abigail King, now a sophomore at Washington University in St. Louis, attended the prestigious Riverdale Country School in the Bronx, where, she says, she and most of her classmates were LD-ers. "Everybody had extra time," she says. "There was hardly anyone who didn't. It became kind of a joke. A lot of people had a business mind about it. They knew how to get to the top. It was like a game to them." King wonders whether her school looked the other way. "I feel like the school knows what's going on," she says. "Their reputations rely on getting people into the right colleges." Laura Clark, Riverdale's director of college guidance, says she is aware of an "increased frenzy" among parents and students to score well on the test but adds, "Of course, to my knowledge, we don't have anybody who's trying to abuse the system."

The LD loophole was made possible in large part by the enactment four years ago of the federal American Disabilities Act (ADA). That legislation cleared the way for students with a wide range of serious (cancer) and less serious (allergies) disabilities to demand accommodation, including the right to additional time on the SAT. As a practical matter, the law made it substantially easier for certified LD students to receive testing modifications without being placed in a special-education program. Getting the LD certification used to be quite a complex matter: Under special-education guidelines, students were required to undergo at least one psychological evaluation from school officials and enter programs specially designed for the seriously challenged. ADA effectively created a new class of disabilities—like attention deficit disorder or asthma—for which students could receive the benefits of additional time but would not otherwise be stigmatized by association with special ed (a genuine hardship for those intent on getting into, say, Yale). Parents, who could already get an evaluation from a "qualified professional" of their choice, began shopping their kids around to psychologists until they received the LD classification they needed.

The 1992 law has unwittingly created a disabilities boom. The Educational Testing Service (ETS), the branch of the college board that administers the three-hour-long SAT, reports that the number of tests given with extended time has nearly doubled: from 18,000 in 1991 to an expected 30,000 this year. (ETS allows LD students an additional 90 minutes or unlimited time, depending on the disability.)

"More kids and parents feel they have the law behind them," says June Zumoff, ETS's associate program director of SAT services for students with disabilities. "[The ADA] gives meat to their requests and provides an avenue of getting what they feel their child needs."

By creating a distinction between LD students and those in special education, ADA did much to erase any lingering stigma that parents had associated with learning problems. Suddenly it was okay to be LD, especially around SAT time.

"It's funny how now a kid suddenly gets a problem in the tenth or eleventh grade," says Harrel Morris, a member of the Committee on Special Education in the Yonkers school district. "We're getting parents who come right out and say it: 'We're only here for extra time; we're not here for special-education services.' "

Parents, thanks to the 1992 law, now know they can back up these demands with a letter from the doctor. "Anyone who at all knows what to do is going to a private psychologist," Morris says. "I think a certain amount of objectivity is lost when you're being paid for something. No one would ever say this, but I think if you can pay for it, you can get it."

One private psychologist in Manhattan, who estimated that the average cost of an evaluation hovers around $1,000, agreed: "You know what they want when they come in. It's not overt, but you know. Parents say things like 'We feel So-and-so has a learning problem and needs more time to take tests.' And the evaluations are not an exact science; they're subjective. Things can be written in a certain way. Some [psychologists] are willing to do it."

The Educational Testing Service's Zumoff says she's aware of what goes on. This year, for the first time, the ETS has created a panel of its own to review applications. But, she says, "every parent I speak to thinks their child honestly has a learning disability. I've seen notes from orthopedic surgeons saying 'I've known this kid his whole life—he's LD.' Some parents are more aggressive than others."

Just how aggressive? A special educator at a high school in "an extremely affluent" New Jersey suburb tells the story of a senior honors student who was earning A's and had already scored above 1,200 on his SAT but whose parents were not satisfied. They had him tested privately and came back to the school with an evaluation that stated he was LD.

"We put him through our own evaluation, and while we did find that he had a pattern of strengths and weaknesses—which is true of everybody—we could not find him LD," the special educator says with evident exasperation. "Both parents were attorneys. The father was an Ivy League *(continued on page 38)*

Illustration by Christian Northeast.

The Gifted-Program Charade

When he was only 2, Makana could read all the words in his Thomas the Tank Engine book. By the time he turned 4, he was reading like a third-grader and doing simple multiplication. His mother, Helen Dano, realized that she'd better start scouting out public schools with gifted programs.

She finally found one, only a short bus ride from her Park Slope apartment, but in the two years Dano spent visiting schools, she became an unwilling witness to a raging debate over the very definition of giftedness, a controversy made hotter by race issues, IQ scores, and *The Bell Curve.* On one side are thousands of panicked parents, driven not only by a desire for a challenging curriculum but by a fear of having their children surrounded by less-teachable kids and "dumbed down" courses.

On the other side are the teachers, administrators, and psychologists who run the gifted programs. They understand that New York's public schools must at least appear to provide for extra-bright children, or face further abandonment by parents. Nearly 300 such programs exist, in about a quarter of the city's schools. But many of these educators don't buy into the very idea of giftedness: They're uncomfortable with the notion of catering to a culled-out elite. And new schools chancellor Rudy Crew, understandably, hasn't gotten to the issue in his five months on the job. Says a spokesman: "The chancellor's first priority is to provide high standards for *all* children."

School officials talk a lot about the egalitarian theories of Joseph Renzulli and Howard Gardner, the two reigning mahatmas of gifted-education thinking, who preach "multiple intelligence" and broaden the definition of exactly who is gifted. But applying these theories to flesh-and-blood classrooms is another matter. Few gifted programs are much more academically challenging than regular classrooms.

"It's a love-hate relationship," says Starr Cline, chairperson of the National Alliance of State Associations for the Gifted. "People love the idea that gifted individuals may make contributions to society, but they hate that one person might be smarter than another."

It's gotten to the point where one parent was driven to say, "I'm almost embarrassed to admit my child is in a gifted program."

And no wonder. "I'd like to get away from the term *gifted,*" says MaryAnn Fagen, who oversees gifted programs at P.S. 110 on the Lower East Side. "Any child is gifted."

Her program, she says, "includes kids in the ninety-ninth reading percentile as well as learning-disabled kids." Instead of offering a special curriculum to the gifted kids, her school gives them "enrichment"—a term that is vague enough in gifted circles to encompass everything from field trips to listening to *Peter and the Wolf.*

Louise Howe, who teaches gifted second-graders at P.S. 64 in Ozone Park, "enriches" her kids by having them do fill-in-the-blanks work sheets after a phonics lesson. A few students get to play with some magnets, although the teacher isn't sure how much they're learning.

"I don't test them. But if only one child later says he remembers the magnet concepts, then I know everyone else remembers it."

The ideas of Harvard's Gardner are sufficiently broad and accommodating to be cited (accurately or not) by educators who want to apply giftedness to almost any kid who produces something the wider culture values. As is the case with Renzulli, many of Gardner's followers even refuse to say whether schools should make reading and writing skills a priority. And by using Gardner's handy terminology, they are able to proclaim certain kids to be gifted with, say, "bodily/kinesthetic intelligence."

"Take Mike Tyson, for example," ventures Barbara Shaunessy, a psychologist and IQ tester for District 15 in Brooklyn. "Some ghetto kids have learning problems. Their gift will be their only salvation out of the ghetto."

Fair enough, maybe, but this is little consolation for parents who want their quick-witted children to be challenged in school. What they seek are accelerated programs. But that's become something of a dirty word among the cognoscenti of gifted education.

"Kids are not going to be reading *War and Peace* in the fifth grade," insists Donna Baker, the coordinator of gifted programs in Brooklyn's District 15. "A child may be ready for that academically, but not socially or developmentally."

Another coordinator puts it more bluntly: "The bureaucracy can't handle acceleration. What would you teach the kid in the sixth grade?"

Another problem is that the central board doesn't even know what gifted programs it offers. There is no list—not even a vague notion of the number and kinds of programs out there. (We counted 287.) There are no guidelines or expectations set by the board.

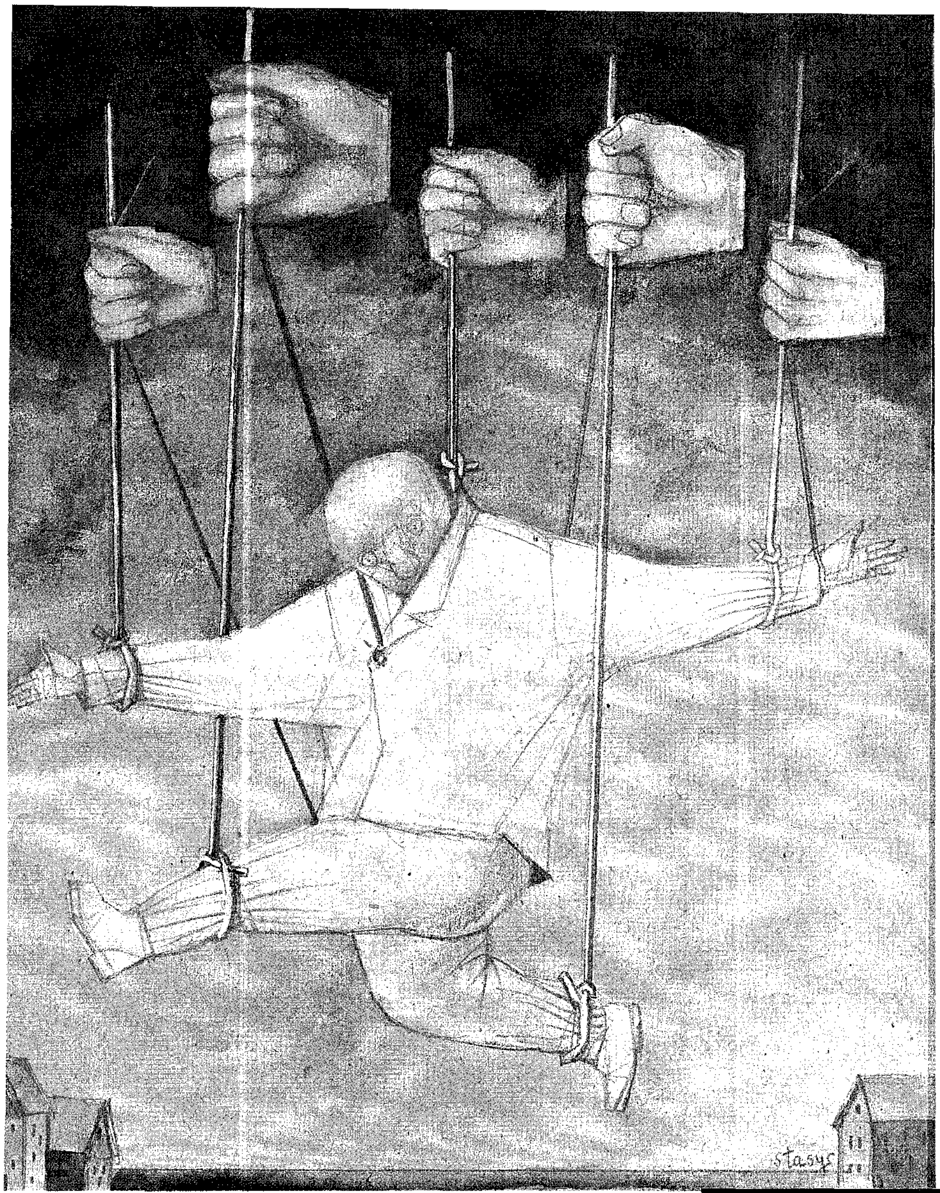
The void has been filled by a welter of acronymed classrooms—EAGLE, ACE, AIM, LEAD, STRENGTHS, ESP, and so on—with definitions for giftedness that are so diluted, so all-inclusive, that virtually any kid can qualify. Much classroom work consists of Easter-egg painting and papier-mâché. This fondness for arts and crafts is part of what teachers call an "integrated curriculum."

With *enrichment* rather than *acceleration* the watchword, actually keeping track of how the students are doing is murky. At P.S. 110, children are enriched in the school's "Renzulli Room" by teacher Janet Sygar. Activities like designing architectural models give the room an upbeat ambience. "Renzulli said you should go beyond academics," says Sygar. "If a child isn't succeeding in academics, you find where they are succeeding and make them feel good." She doesn't know, however, whether the heightened self-esteem translates into improved academic achievement: "It works sometimes. Sometimes it doesn't."

It is this apparent lack of structure that upsets the dour-looking Romanian father who is taking the tour of Murray Hill's P.S. 116 with a group of other parents. He has already visited several schools. After glumly staring at an art class's nifty reproduction of Leonardo's *Proportions of Man,* he frets, "There's too much art. I would like to find a school that teaches thinking."

Good luck. "There is no true gifted program in this district," says Eugene Fechter, who last year taught gifted fourth-graders at Harlem's P.S. 46. "They won't set one up because principals don't want to lose their brightest kids. They don't want their reading scores to go down."

Meanwhile, Helen Dano, though she did find a gifted program for little Makana, is considering home schooling.



SPENCE JUNIORS HAVE
"THERE'S A LOT OF CR

Horace Mann, in the Riverdale section of the Bronx, has a healthy balance between young scions who pull into the school parking lot every morning driving Jaguars and Lexuses and other kids who take the bus. "The great thing about Horace Mann," attested Jun Yong Um, whose mother works part-time in a nail salon, "is you're not alone. For every guy who drives a Jaguar, there's another kid who walks."

The schools are also populated by middle-class families where both parents work to pay the five-figure annual tuitions, which doesn't even include one's expected contribution to the annual-giving and capital-improvement campaigns. These parents may be the most beleaguered class of all. Too well-off to qualify for financial aid, too poor to afford the wall-to-wall tutoring, they're forced to develop a Zenlike attitude toward the competition and keep their fingers crossed that their children don't run into any costly academic or psychological potholes over the course of their college-preparatory odysseys.

Indeed, the disparity between the rich and the rest has grown sufficiently embarrassing that this year, for the first time, the Dalton School is offering Saturday-morning SAT tutoring for free. "It's an equity issue," explained Gardner Dunnan, Dalton's headmaster. "Our intention is to give access to families who can't afford the private tutoring."

Jun Yong Um, who can't afford all the outside wizards, took what these days qualifies as a radical approach to applying to college. First of all, he wrote his own personal essay rather than hiring a pro to help him write it, as is the current fashion. "My mom said, 'Just be honest and tell them who you are,' " he explained.

Then he dared to take courses that interested him rather than those that might enhance his chances of getting into Harvard. "People told me not to take music theory," he said. "People said, 'You've got to stick it out in the highest level of precalculus.' I felt more comfortable at the level below. People said, 'You have to go for AP [advanced placement] English for Harvard.' I have a teacher who teaches great Joyce and great Chaucer. I said, 'I'll take the senior electives over AP.' "

On the other hand, Alex Conrad decided to err on the side of caution. She and her parents hired separate, specialist tutors for the verbal and math sections of the SAT. "I don't think one person can do both," she explained. "I wanted to break 1300," and she did.

Her family also retained Frank Leana, one of the most respected freelance college advisers, and for ten years the college counselor at the Trinity School, to help Alex "finalize" her college list and to make her application sing. Frank suggested that Alex apply to Cornell's overlooked School of Agriculture and Life Sciences and say she planned to major in entomology (one suspects Cornell's admissions committee doesn't see many city kids expressing a passion for bugs). " 'Don't apply to Biological Sciences,' " Alex said Leana warned her, " 'because you're going to be competing with all the premeds.' "

Alex and her college adviser also had what she describes as a "faxing correspondence" concerning her personal essay. "They don't do the work for you," the teenager explained. "They just guide you. I don't know if he did $3,000 worth of helping me. If you can afford it, it's a nice thing to have."

Confidentiality prevented Leana, who projects a kindly Mr. Chips aura, from discussing Alex. But he said he detects a "heightened frenzy" on the part of parents. "This past year has been one of our two best years," he attested cheerfully. "The current economy has contributed to the feeling of panic."

Parents feel, he added, that unless their child gets accepted by one of a dozen or two elite colleges—the Ivy League plus Williams, Amherst, Swarthmore, Middlebury, Wellesley, Stanford, Duke, and so on—"you won't be competitive in the job market."

Leana says he tries to discourage what he calls "magical thinking" on the part of parents who expect miracles. However, that's not to say that he doesn't attempt to pull a rabbit out of his hat. "I like to meet young people at the end of tenth or the beginning of eleventh grade so you can have some effect on the courses they choose, and the standardized tests they take, and the way they spend next summer," said the adviser, who is also the author of *Getting Into College* (Hill & Wang/Noonday).

For the adventurous private-schooler who can afford the airfare, Leana recommends travel to a Third World country. "Colleges like to see that a kid has reached out beyond their own culture or helped those in need," he explains.

Of course, digging irrigation ditches in Malawi isn't for every

Illustration by Stasys Eidrigevicius.

teenager, particularly if they're used to spending summers sailing off Nantucket. "I know a child whose parents want to send her to Russia this summer," said a psychologist who treats the teenager, perhaps unsurprisingly, for depression. "The kid is not interested in Russia at all. She's interested in the great outdoors. But the parents are saying, 'No more of this crunchy-granola stuff. You have to have something more interesting on your record.' "

Another way to express one's well-roundedness is through the personal essay. Frank Leana explained how he helped transform one twelfth-grader's yawner on cross-country track into a page-turner worthy of Danielle Steel. "I said, 'Sarah, I want you to talk about one of the most dramatic moments in your career as a runner,' " he recalled.

"She thought and she thought. Finally, she said, 'I want to talk about a particular race.' " Further interrogation revealed that her estranged father had attended the race. "As she comes around one of the bends, she saw him standing there," Frank remembered. "Suddenly, the essay took flight. It wasn't just about running but about her relationship with her often-absent father."

THE JUNIORS AT THE SPENCE SCHOOL HAVE DEVELOPED a surefire way to relieve the pressure of getting into college. Every few days they have a good, communal, cathartic cry. "There's a lot of crying because of the stress," explained Sarah Chapman as she sat in the junior lounge amid classmates doing their homework before math class. "The minute you get a bad grade, you're like, 'I'm not going to get into college.' "

"I think it says something that we feel safe enough to cry," observed Katherine de Vos as her friends nodded in agreement. "We are a fairly close class. If I didn't feel close enough, I wouldn't cry."

The juniors over at Brearley—considered the city's most academically rigorous girls' school—might do well to adopt the ritual. One senior spent the better part of her recent interview with an Ivy League alumnus bemoaning Brearley's competitive culture. "She was talking about the three or four people who had dropped out of her class within the past year," her interviewer recalls. "She said, 'One of them stopped going to school, and the next day we saw her working at the bagel shop nearby.' She seemed to think the school would be much better off if it was co-ed. They were getting a little too competitive without any distractions."

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G BECAUSE OF THE STRESS," SAID ONE.

Even so, one has to take one's hat off to all these kids merely for having survived until the twelfth grade. They've been riding an accelerated curriculum and pressurized expectations since early childhood. "We forgot our daughter's homework when we went down to Florida," said the mother of a current Nightingale first-grader. "She was in hysterics—'I'm supposed to do my workbook every night.' I said, 'We'll do extra when we get home.' " To which the sobbing little girl replied, "No! It's not the type of thing you can catch up on."

She may have been right. "The amazing spread of tutoring," explained John Ford, a learning specialist who tutors kids from St. Bernard's, Trinity, and Brearley, "is a result of the incredibly accelerated curriculum at these schools and the fact that the schools insist all the kids march along at the same speed."

Dalton recently counseled a family whose daughter was having trouble reading in first grade (when I went to school, *everybody* had trouble reading in the first grade) to repeat the grade. "Both the child and the parents were devastated," said a learning specialist the family hired to help the girl, whom she described as "exceedingly bright," learn to read over the summer. She did, and Dalton "reluctantly" let the child into second grade. "Why would we want to label a child like that learning-disabled," the specialist asked, "and have her carry this through much of the rest of her life?"

The children themselves have even adopted the technobabble, a 7-year-old telling Jeannette Jansky, one of the city's leading learning specialists, that he felt "challenged" by first grade. "Instead of saying 'I can't do it,' the kid might say, 'Writing is a learning challenge for me,' " she explained. "It puts a positive spin on it."

To help children keep up, in some families the tutor has become almost as ubiquitous as the housekeeper or mom's personal trainer. "I occasionally speak with his teachers on the phone about how he's doing in class, where they think his problems lie, and where their syllabus is going," explained a "homework helper," at $50 an hour a sort of discount tutor, usually a recent college graduate without special training. However, his fee doesn't include ghostwriting his client's term papers. "I will never say, 'Willy Loman had this problem and that's your thesis.' I will say, 'What exactly is that relationship between Biff and Willy Loman?' Until he'll say, 'Yeah, why don't we do it on that!' "

Many students, such as Alex Conrad, have had tutors throughout their education. "They come and go as you need them," Alex says nonchalantly. So pervasive has private tutoring become, not only to keep children from flunking out but to give them an edge over the competition, that Dalton issued a policy memo on the subject. It asks, "Have all internal resources been exhausted?" and warns, "Any clandestine tutoring is strongly discouraged."

The directive probably has little impact. A mother with children at both Dalton and Spence proudly stated that she brings her children's tutors along to parent-teacher conferences; she even sees the tutor as the solution to family conflict. "If the child is having difficulty learning to read, the last person they want to show it to is their mother," she said. "When you have two very accomplished parents, it's like having a little sapling growing up around two very tall trees. It's easy to feel you're not going to measure up."

A child who does not measure up reflects badly on his or her high-achieving parents. "There's almost a fetishistic sense of power, being able to associate your child with one of these schools," explained one woman. "Especially at one of these East Side dinner parties. The women don't work, so all they talk about is school. It's like belonging to the same country club or something."

The pressure to maintain the family winning streak manifests itself in symptoms like eating disorders, which experts have described as "rampant" in the elite private schools. "You see little epidemics where a whole bunch of them start doing it at once," stated a psychologist with patients at Brearley and Chapin. "It's a symptom of the pressure to be perfect."

An eighth-grader at the Chapin School spoke touchingly of how her class tried to help an anorexic classmate celebrate her birthday. "We brought her a fat-free muffin because we know she's worried about her weight, but she wouldn't eat it," the teenager recalled. "I think she's very insecure. Her mother is a nutritionist, and her mother is incredibly thin. [Other] mothers have been calling her mother, [but] she says [her daughter's] fine."

This Vince Lombardi approach to child-rearing spills over onto the playing fields, according to a mother whose unathletic third-grader turned into a bed wetter under the relentless obscenities heaped on him at recess by more coordinated classmates. Signing him up for peewee hockey, run by a couple of high-powered dads, didn't help his self-esteem. "The atmosphere on that hockey team went from 'Gee, everybody ought to have fun' to 'Kill, kill, kill!' in about four months," the mother remembered. "It's a matter of the culture running rampant and no-

Learning-Disabled

continued from page 34

graduate and desperately wanted his son to go there. Their kid was an excellent kid, but not quite their . . . caliber. It was like they wanted him labeled LD as an explanation for why he wasn't exactly what they wanted. When we rejected his application, the parents threatened to go to court. We knew other parents were watching to see what we would do. We held our ground, though. Of course, soon after, the student was accepted into the college of his choice, and the matter was dropped entirely."

The case illustrates the intensity with which such battles are often waged. For the schools, it's a fight for resources and money. The law now gives parents the right to a hearing at their request, and if they want it, an evaluation performed by a school psychologist. The evaluations alone can cost school districts up to $1,500 per student, and that doesn't include the costs of hearings and possible appeals. And then, of course, there is the question of wasted time, time that could be devoted to students who are actually learning-disabled.

"It's very frustrating. There are lots of kids that need help," says White Plains High School's Gruen, "and we don't want to keep it from any students who really need it. But at the same time, we don't want to give students an unfair advantage by granting them accommodations they don't deserve."

But, ah, there's the rub. Somewhere, lost among all the posturing, is the generally agreed-upon truth that for students who don't need it, more time doesn't necessarily translate into better scores. Officials at ETS and a number of educators say that for most students, there's little correspondence between extended time and increased scores.

"Only the craftier kids, who probably do pretty well already, will really benefit from more time. They'll know what to do with it," says Mark Benevento, a New York–area private tutor who helps students prepare for the SAT. "Of course, it will help LD kids. But for the majority of kids it doesn't matter. Either they know it or they don't."

Meanwhile, college-admissions staffs say SAT scores are becoming a less important factor on applications. "Many schools don't place as much emphasis on the SATs anymore," says Robert Shaw, associate dean at Brown University. "I think most schools have noticed an increase in students claiming LD and getting extended time. We know that some maneuvering takes place, and we try to sort out the students who are simply trying to get the edge. If there's a big discrepancy between grades and scores, we notice. Good grades, LD or not, are the biggest indicator we look at."

None of which seems to matter to parents and students, who continue to pursue classification and the elusive "edge" that comes with it. And it seems they will continue pushing even when they know it won't help much. There's a reason for this: For some parents, an LD classification may help explain away a child's shortcomings; for others, it allays deeper insecurities—their own.

"It's parents trying to live their lives through their kids," says Benevento. "Half the time, they're the ones more concerned about the schools and the scores and getting the edge. And sometimes it seems like it's the quest of getting it, the satisfaction of thinking they've done the most for their kid."

Which is odd, since the message sent to students is quite obviously double-edged. "I don't think people even look at it as cheating," Peter T., now a freshman at an Ivy League school, says with practiced sangfroid. "They just see it as doing what they have to do." Peter took his SAT with extended time despite being an honors student and consistently scoring well on standardized tests. He was diagnosed LD by a private psychologist. One can almost hear the smirk in his voice when, in a not-so-subtle deadpan, he says, "I don't think it hurt me or anyone else. I did do better with more time." He won't say he got an unfair advantage, but he mock-confides, "To tell you the truth, I would never have thought I was LD—but then again, I'm not a doctor."

body checking it. The fathers are as competitive as any kid."

Toward the end of the season, the dads even replaced her son with a ringer. "It was supposed to be third-graders," she said, "and they brought in a fifth-grader to beef up the team."

Fortunately, the nerds get their revenge in high school, when academic prowess and the intensifying obsession with getting into college take precedence over how well you shoot baskets. "We're not very good, sports-wise," admitted Barnaby Kendall, a captain of the lackluster Horace Mann Lions football team. But when the superior Riverdale Falcons start talking trash, Barnaby and his teammates have a standard comeback. "We say, 'Yeah, but you'll be working for us in twenty years.' "

WHEN JUN YONG UM CALLED HARVARD AFTER he got home on the afternoon the early acceptances were announced, he got a constant busy signal. "On the one hand, I want them to pick up," he wrote in his diary. "On the other hand, I'm afraid they will."

Finally, after about a half-hour, he got through. The person in the admissions office asked for his SAT scores to verify that he was who he said he was. There was an excruciating pause and then: " 'Congratulations. You're admitted to the Class of 2000.' I was shocked," Jun said. "I said, 'Are you sure you have the Jun Yong Um in the Bronx?' "

Reaction to his triumph, which he kept secret even from his mother until he had the acceptance letter in his hand, wasn't what he'd imagined. "My mom shook my hand and said, 'Good luck,' " Jun remembered. "There were no tears or anything."

Mrs. Um received congratulatory phone calls from fellow members of Horace Mann's Korean Parents Association. "They were very proud to have a Korean student at Harvard," Jun explained.

The only sour note came when a classmate who hadn't gotten into Harvard was asked to support Jun's nomination for valedictorian. "He said, 'He's in Harvard already. He doesn't need any more college credit,' " Jun reported. "It really hurt me."

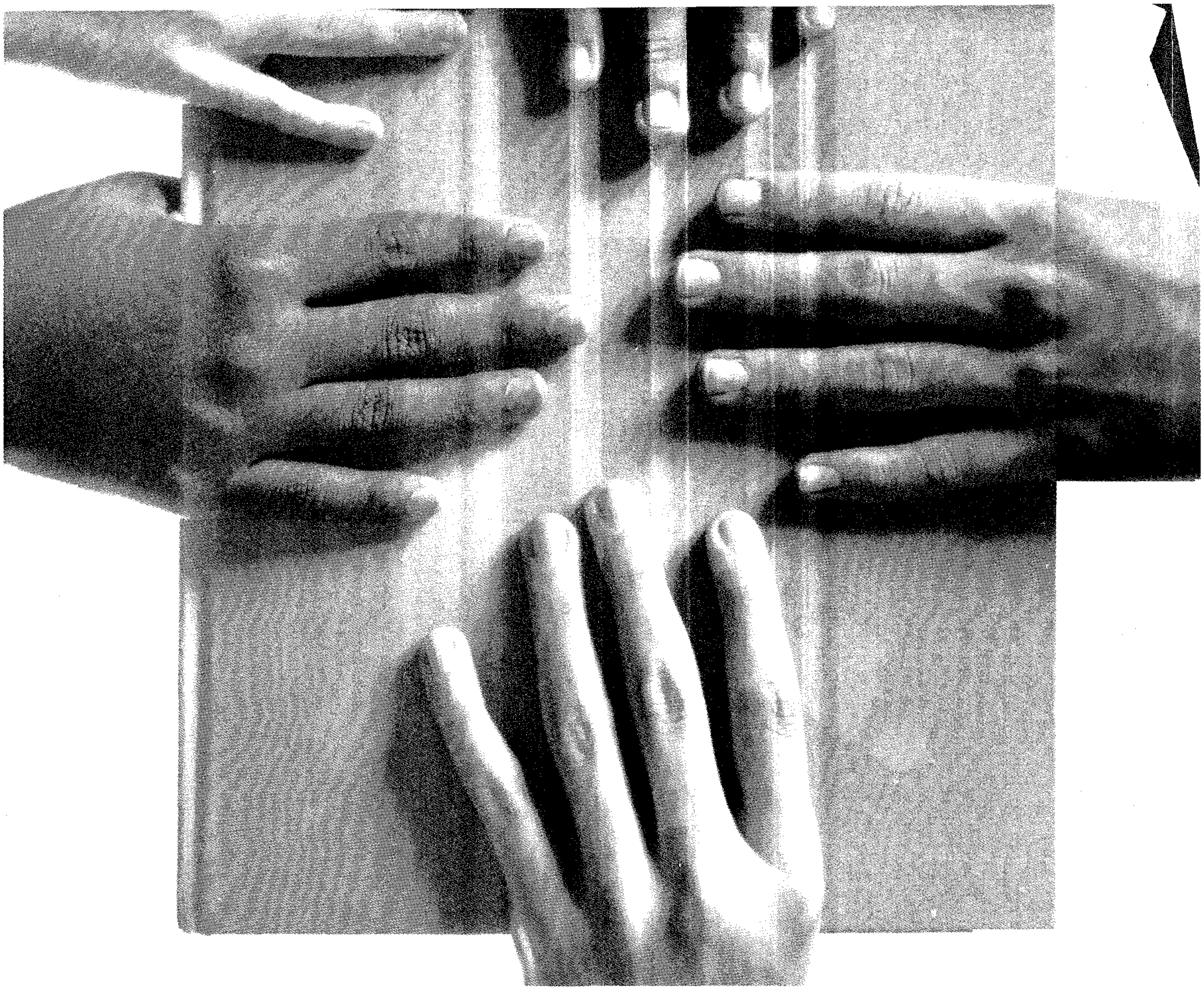
Acceptances are also important to the schools, which use them to market themselves to the next crop of parents. Ultimately, it all boils down to numbers—how many applications you get and whether they're a politically appealing mix. "We have a balanced parent body coming into the school pretty steadily now," boasted one school head, citing a billionaire "on one end to people who are social workers in Harlem on the other end."

"The schools clearly do a selling job in their admissions process based on the number of successful applicants to Ivy League schools they have," observed a Trinity mother who recently canceled a dinner engagement to help her son—who'd transferred to Trinity from a more nurturing downtown school and couldn't keep up with the pace—study for an upcoming French test. "All of these high schools seem somewhat akin to sausage factories."

At Nightingale, the school's college counselor undergoes an annual inquisition at the hands of the Board of Trustees over college acceptances, according to a board member. "If it wasn't a very strong class, they'll look at the teachers" to blame, explained the board member. She said each member is provided with a list of the most recent class of graduates and their SAT scores and college acceptances. "There's always going to be some blowhard who says, 'These are pretty weak.' "

The week of April 3, the final acceptance letters from the Ivy League go out, and Alex Conrad will learn whether all the years of tutoring and of Frank Leana helped. Whatever the outcome, Alex has begun to suspect there's something flawed about a culture that seems to prize the end product over the learning process. "For the last thirteen years, all you've heard about is college," she observed. "Then one day it comes, and is that it?" ■

Illustration by Christian Northeast.



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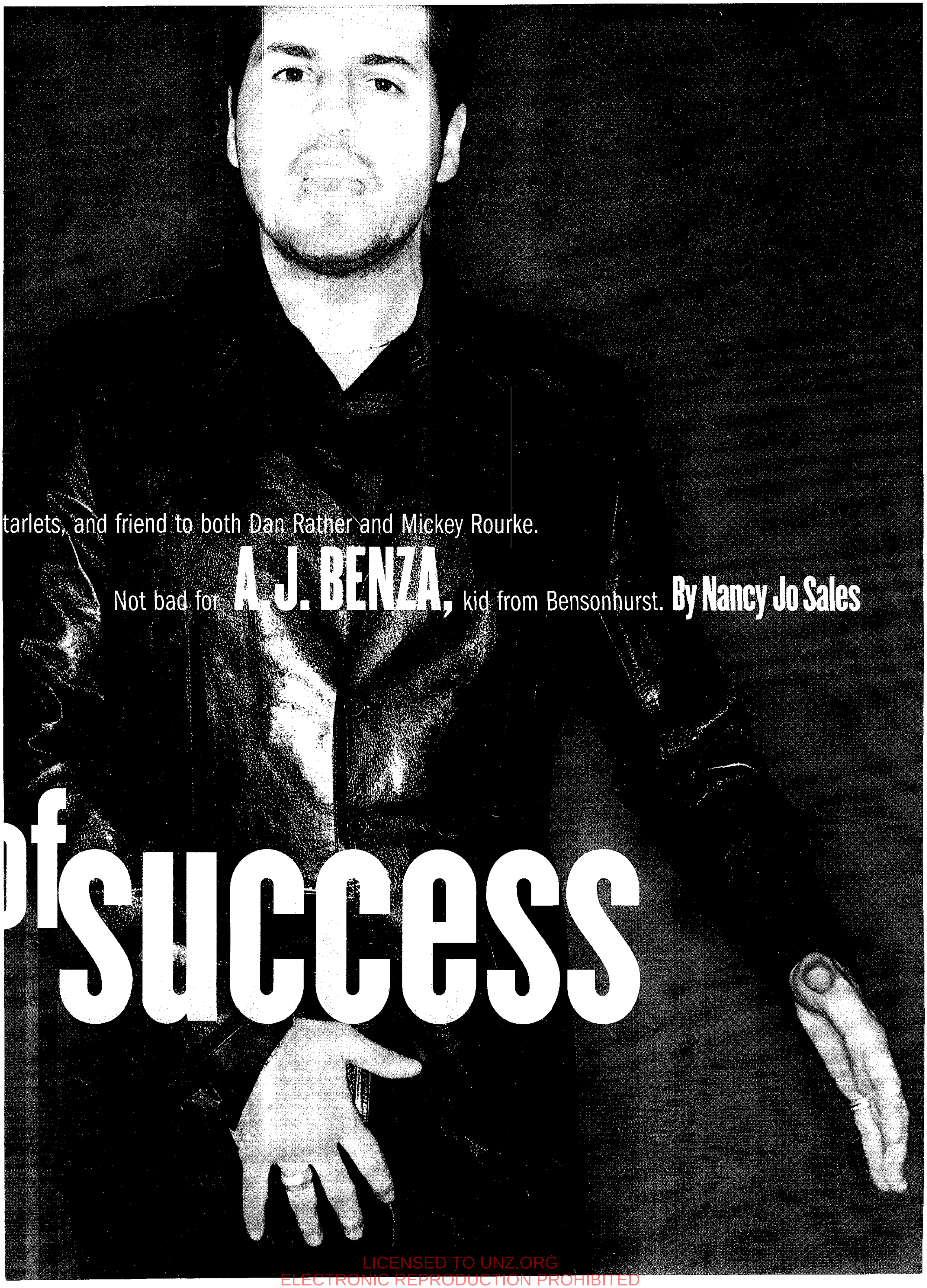
From small-time **Brooklyn bookie** to ***Daily News* gossip columnist,** TV fixture, l

the sweet smell

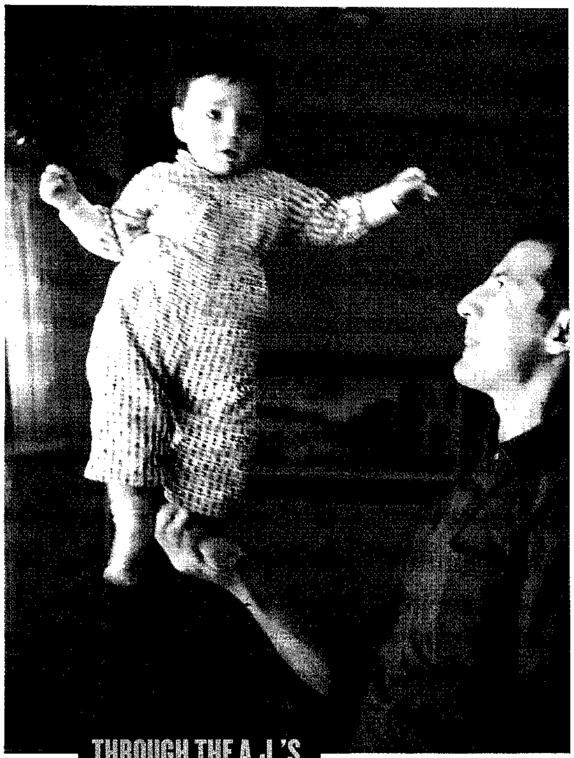
PHOTOGRAPHED BY STEPHANIE PFRIENDER
FOR NEW YORK

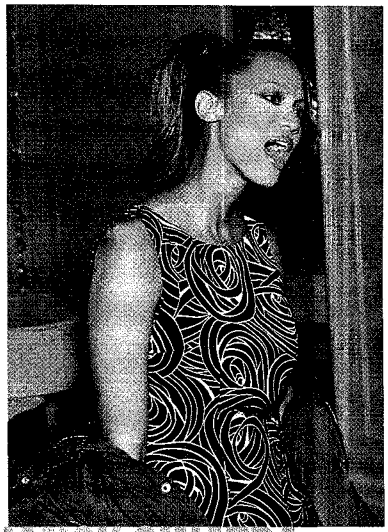


tarlets, and friend to both Dan Rather and Mickey Rourke.

Not bad for **A.J. BENZA,** kid from Bensonhurst. **By Nancy Jo Sales**

# of success





“That I can sit at work and NANCY SINATRA can
To have Denise Brown call me. I GET HIGH on

THROUGH THE A.J.'S
From left to right, A.J. and A.J. Sr.; A.J. and singer Nancy Sinatra; A.J. and model Tyra Banks; A.J. and producer Robert Evans.

MISS UNDERSTOOD, working a Kabuki Streisand with Marie Antoinette hair and glitter lips, shimmies around on six-inch platforms, seesawing a black G-string aggressively through the crotch of her fishnets.

“I fucking hate that shit,” says A. J. Benza, throwing back a shot of whiskey.

The lava lamps of Tunnel's Cosmic Cavern give A.J.'s hair an eerie glow. A.J.'s hair always shines, the Aveda oil combed back in an optimal refractory arc, but here in Kenny Scharf's ostensible kitsch future, A.J.'s retro do makes him stick out like an Amish guy at the Wiz. Although he's brought along Mario and Adolfo and a couple of the other “guys he runs with” from Brooklyn, this isn't really his kind of place.

“I hate all drag queens,” A.J. says.

But A.J.'s getting some items. A.J. will go anywhere to get items.

A glazed-and-baked Miss Piggy in white angora approaches A.J. She's a publicist, “one of my yentas,” A.J. says. Miss Piggy tells A.J. that Whoopi Goldberg has been calling up the mayor, bitching about how cars parked near the set—of her new movie, *The Associate*—keep getting towed. “If he doesn't do something, she says, she's gonna move everything to Toronto,” Miss Piggy stage-whispers in A.J.'s ear, above the Tunnel's snarling techno-pop. A.J. nods; that's an item.

Pierced-septum club waifs with doe eyes watch him, wondering whether he could make them famous. A.J.'s busy.

At the bar, a boy sidles up to a guy who looks like Sal Mineo. “Are you A.J.?”

Sal Mineo just points to the middle of the room. There, a Hell's Angel is telling A.J. how he saw Sean Penn at Scores getting table dances and “acting like an animal.”

Not an item. “I'm not gonna print that,” A.J. says. “I like Sean.”

By 1 A.M., A.J. is out of there and climbing into his gray Nissan 240SX. “Everybody's a rat,” A.J. says. “Everybody tells on everybody.

“It makes my job shitty, because you never know who's talking about you.” A.J. sighs. “That part of the job I can't stand. It makes my stomach turn sometimes.”

Next stop, Boom. Then Bowery Bar. Then Spy. Then Lemon. Every night, not necessarily in that order, at close to the speed of light. A.J.'s gotten so many tickets for wild driving, when he goes to L.A. he has to rent from a no-questions-asked operation run by a Pakistani guy who thinks he's a TV star.

“Harry Ace,” A.J. says. “I gave him some wine and a snake plant to keep him happy.”

He grabs his cellular. The buttons glow in the dark of the Nissan.

“Hey baby,” A.J. says. “You doing good, baby?” A.J. calls everybody *baby*, from supermodels to the director of communications for the mayor. (“*Baby?*” Cristyne Lategano snapped back, the story goes. “Come on, Cristyne,” A.J. told Lategano. “I call all girls baby.” “*Girls?!*”)

A.J.'s depressed. On New Year's Eve he broke up with his “girl,” and when he isn't talking to her on the cell phone, he's talking about her. “One minute we're having champagne and a bubble bath, and the next minute I'm hailing a cab in my pajamas.” He shakes his head.

“FROM BUBBLE BATH TO BITTER BREAKUP.”

A.J. likes to talk in *Daily News* headlines.

Though he seems truly torn up about Rebecca, a petite Puerto Rican bartender-model (“She taught me I should take vitamins,” A.J. says nostalgically), A.J. doesn't mind talking about other women either. “I love women. Wine and women.” Yes, he went out with Nancy Sinatra. “She's *Frank's daughter*—how could you pass it up?” (He admits he struck out.) He had this brief, you know, *thing* with Patti Davis (“She's, like, deep—*too* deep”) and a briefer thing with a not-to-be-named supermodel. “It was just one night. It was like climbing Mount Everest.” Then there was this other night, with a famous young blonde actress who A.J. thought was Drew Barrymore. “I was a little drunk. I didn't stay long. The next morning, she had to do *Regis and Kathie Lee.*”

And then there was the time A.J. walked up to Robert De Niro at a party and told him they'd just “broken up with the same beautiful Jamaican girl.”

“He didn't really want to talk about it,” A.J. says.

That's okay, because A.J. knows there are names—boldface names—who do want to talk about it, names who invite A.J. to their parties and even put him in their movies. Names who might even consider A.J. a friend.

“I would have him here,” says legendary Hollywood bad boy–producer Robert Evans. “He's fun.”

A.J. has stories: backyard weenie roasts in Greenwich Village with Warren Beatty, party-hopping with Mickey Rourke and Abel Ferrara, naked swimming in the grotto at Hef's mansion. A.J. sometimes breakfasts at the Carlyle with Dan Rather.

“Dan knows I have a fucking edge,” A.J. says.

“To me, that I can sit at work and Nancy Sinatra can call me and just want to bullshit is one of the coolest things in the world.” A.J. is cutting off the cars getting

Photograph: right, Patrick McMullan.

is one of the COOLEST THINGS IN THE WORLD.
ff. I'm sorry for feeling that way, but I think it's great.”

in his way in East Side traffic. “To me, at the height of the O.J. trial, to have Denise Brown call me at my girlfriend's house. . . . I get high on that stuff. I'm sorry for feeling that way, but I think it's great. I'm still in awe of certain people and getting close to certain people.”

A MERE FOUR YEARS AGO, A.J. was just another “guinea from Brooklyn” who couldn't get past the velvet ropes at the Manhattan clubs he was hitting every night, hunting for stories to feed to Linda Stasi, his mentor at New York *Newsday* (and later the *Daily News*). Today, at 33, A. J. Benza is on his way to attaining the kind of celebrity he's wanted since he saw Sinatra at Madison Square Garden in 1974.

“It was chills all night,” A.J. says.

In his daily “Hot Copy” and Sunday “Downtown” columns, A.J. has perfected—if that's the right word—a new genre of gossip: hard-boiled tattle. It's a form that fits so comfortably into the *Daily News* demographic that you wonder why they didn't try it before.

“Fucking be real about everything,” A.J. says, before launching into a series of ready-made reality sound bites.

“Tommy Lee [Jones]—say no to a script once in a while.

“*Friends* stars—stay home every once in a while.

“Diane Sawyer—you ass-kissed Michael Jackson on national television and gave journalism a bad name.”

A.J. is the most ubiquitous gossip on television: daily on the E! network's *The Gossip Show*, frequently on *Hard Copy, Geraldo, Entertainment Tonight*, the USA Network, the Movie Channel, Showtime, occasionally on Rolonda, Montel, assorted talk shows. “Leeza wants me to come to L.A.?” A.J. says smarmily, for effect. “I say, sure, hey, where you putting me up?”

In December, E! signed A.J. to develop his own talk show. “He's very New York,” says L.A.-based E! senior vice-president of programming Fran Shea, who invented *Talk Soup* and brought Howard Stern to national TV. “He has the kind of personality where some people love him, some people hate him. I don't care if people hate him. Some people will turn him on just to hate him.”

The “Downtown” column has become a serial autobiography of A.J.'s swinging life and superswinging friends—a kind of *Goodfellas*-meets-*Great Expectations*, a *fin de siècle* rat pack. He broke the news of his E! show there, proclaiming it a “hip *Joe Franklin Show*” in which A.J. might “accompany Mickey Rourke to his therapist appointment and learn the fine art of celebrity dieting with the Barbi twins.” He quoted Hef advising him after the Rebecca breakup, “I don't believe you're ready for commitment.”

“And then there's *Ransom* and me,” A.J. wrote of his five-minute role in the upcoming Mel Gibson vehicle, directed by Ron Howard. “I play a determined reporter in this one—*stretch.*”

“He has a hood quality that's good for movies,” says Brian Grazer, Howard's partner and producer.

Famous people seem to want A.J. to be famous, maybe because they don't encounter many guys who so embody what A.J. calls “the real real.”

“He strikes me as a for-real person,” says Grazer. “He looks you in the eye when you talk to him. He's a colorful guy in an unartificial way.”

“He's like Popeye,” says Evans. “ ‘I am what I am.’ ”

“When I see a girl I know I really want to fuck,” A.J. is telling me in the car, “my asshole tightens up for a second. *Just a second.*”

A.J. IS AT RAO'S, THE EXCLUSIVE, ten-table Upper East Side Italian restaurant where, A.J. says, wiseguys have been known to show up. Also Scorsese. Nicholas Pileggi. Tony Danza. And A.J., on probation. A.J. once wrote something ungenerous about Rao's eclectic clientele “and they took me in the back and sat me down and talked to me about it. It was like being called into the fucking principal's office.”

A guy in a salmon-colored suit at the end of the bar stares at us with alligator eyes.

In the bathroom, a woman is crying. “Fourteen years I been married to him,” she sobs. “I know. I know how it is,” soothes her friend. They apply lipstick.

Nicky “Vest,” the bartender with the Gotti-esque silver hair, showcases a sleek Versace waistcoat tonight.

“I like the vest,” says A.J.

“A customer gave it to me,” Nicky says, pouring A.J. his usual, double espresso and Sambuca. “It was too small on me, so I had the tailor let it out.” He shows A.J. the handiwork.

“Yeah,” says A.J., “it looks good.”

We sit at the bar. A.J. keeps his leather jacket on the whole time. He's telling me about how he became a bookie, a story that, like most stories of A.J.'s pre-fabulous days, is really about his father.

“I loved him—he was my hero,” A.J. says. “He was just like De Niro; that's why I love De Niro so much.” A.J. has six pictures of the actor up in his bedroom, and three of his father.

“My dad was a real tough guy.” A narcotics cop turned carpet salesman, Al (like A.J., Alfred Joseph) Benza once held the record for the biggest drug bust in history, A.J. says. Al Benza nailed Saul Gelb, heir apparent to Waxy Gordon, the infamous gambling kingpin of the late forties. A.J.'s great-uncle Happy Maione was on the other side—“They called him Happy cause he was always mad.” Happy, a prolific hit man for Meyer Lansky, died in the electric chair.

“If I had to pick my last meal,” A.J. says, “I'd have a bowl of my mother's pasta—marinara sauce. Any Italian kid'll tell you that.”

Anyway, A.J. says, back in 1983, he was a journalism major at Long Island University's C. W. Post College when his father “got cancer bad.” So A.J. had to start making “big money—fast,” to pay the mortgage on the family home in West Islip, where they'd moved from Bensonhurst in the late sixties.

"I knew sports," he says, swishing his espresso around. A photo of Jerry Lewis beams hysterically at us from the wall. "And I knew how to bullshit people."

So he became a bookie.

"Twenty-one years old—you'd have to be a drug dealer to make more money than I was making. It was ridiculous," A.J. says. "I had men across the country paying me money for my advice. I had men send me watches in the mail, tickets to shows, money for my birthday.

"But I was 21 years old, and I didn't mind if I was stealing money from people. I didn't care.

"Once, I met a man on the phone from Colorado, and I convinced him of a scam. I said, 'I'm going to Las Vegas, and five of my best customers, they're all giving me $50,000, and I'm gonna go to Vegas and in a week's time—everybody's gonna make four or five times their payment.'

"I was bullshitting him—I wasn't talking to nobody but him. He was a stockbroker, this guy—he looked like Richard Dreyfuss. So I went with my friend Big Tony. We took a limousine to Caesars Palace.

"Twenty-one years old. This is the kind of balls we're talking about. Richard Dreyfuss met us with a valise just like in the movies. I'm in the back of the limousine, Dreyfuss is in the front, and he's got 48,300—he's short seventeen. And—who do I think I am—I say, 'Rich, you're short seventeen.' And he says, 'What?' I went by the name of Johnny back then, Johnny Rourke, like Mickey Rourke—it came from the character in *Reckless* 'cause I loved the movie. So Rich says, 'You're kidding me.' This guy starts pulling hundreds out of his back pocket, his front coat pockets, and sure enough, he says, 'Johnny, call me in a couple days and tell me how you're doing'—and he leaves.

"So of course, 21 years old, I wasn't smart enough to get on a plane and go home. I didn't do that. We gambled it, and we fucking lost it—all. Lost it all in three days. I had to call Rich the next day and tell him we lost it all and I needed 12,000 Western Unioned to me.

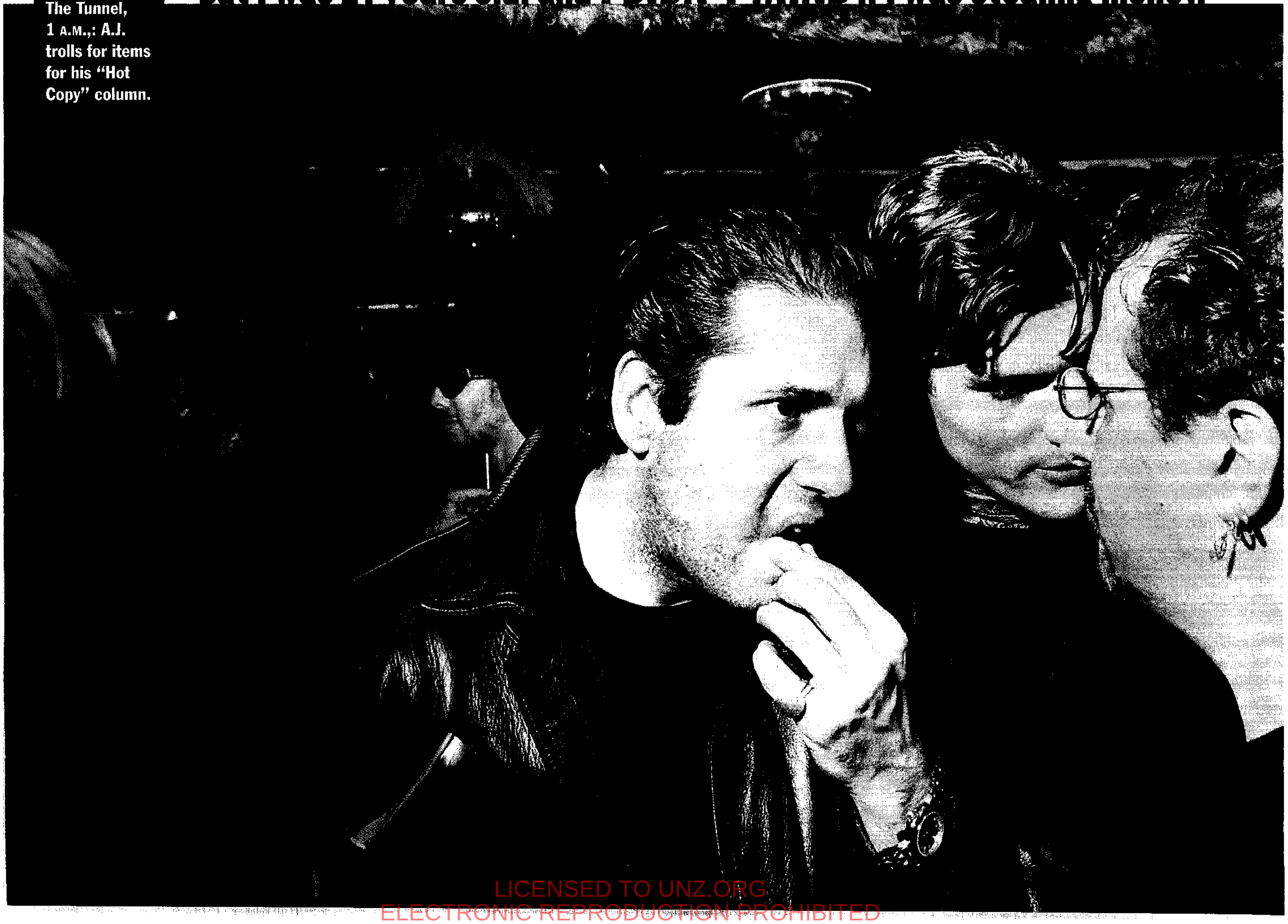
"And he sends it. Why? Because I was a really good bullshitter and I made him believe I had some really good information on some games. I'll never forget it. I told him I was betting the Toronto Blue Jays doubleheader and needed 12,000—cash—and he did it. I went home and gave my mother 6,000 and I bought a Mazda RX-7 for 6,000 cash."

"A.J.," I say, "don't you mind if any of this gets printed?"

"I don't give a shit," A.J. says, pocketing the three coffee beans at the bottom of his glass. He keeps them in a special bowl at home for luck. "Who's gonna say what?"

SCORES, THE UPSCALE STRIP CLUB ON EAST 60th, is where A.J. gets the best items. "You can approach a guy at Scores," A.J. says. "The common denominator is naked women."

"I had men across the country PAYING ME MONEY FOR MY ADVICE. I had men send me watches in the mail, tickets to shows, money for my birthday. But I was 21 years old, and I DIDN'T MIND if I was stealing money."



LOOK AT ME

The Tunnel, 1 A.M.: A.J. trolls for items for his "Hot Copy" column.

A.J. swings into the mirrored pleasure dome with the same air of eager expectation I notice him exhibiting, some days later, before eating a whole Domino's pizza courtside at a Knicks game.

But Scores is dead. Strippers dance for empty chairs, looking bored. No Sean. No Bruce and Demi.

"I'm on O.J. watch," A.J. says. "He's in town, and I know he's gonna wind up here."

No O.J.

Lonnie, the Scores publicist, comes up to A.J. and gives him the big-guy handshake, hand-to-hand and other-hand-to-upper-arm. A.J. puts his hands on people a lot, like punctuation. Italian men he kisses on both cheeks. His hands are laden with silver rings, each one given to him "by someone who loves me," A.J. says.

A.J. is seated at a VIP table next to a wall of TV screens. Coincidentally, the TVs are showing A.J.'s face on *The Gossip Show*.

"Hey, A.J., you're in 3-D." A young engineer from *The Howard Stern Show* has come over to pay his respects.

A.J.'s been a regular of Stern's ever since he told the show's professional prank caller, "Captain Janks," that he was "going to hurt him." They'd had a clash at a Stern birthday party, where Janks called A.J. "a two-faced ass."

"There'll be two hits, Janks," A.J. said on air. "Me hitting you and you hitting the floor." (Somehow, A.J. and Janks made up by the end of the segment.)

"I'm a fighter, always have been." It's another legacy, A.J. says, from his dad. "My father could be the funniest guy at the party, but if somebody said the wrong thing to my mother, it was Jake La Motta. I grew up seeing beatings in the street."

When the basketball coach at West Islip High wouldn't play A.J. enough because he was always wearing loud sneaks and sweats ("I was a hot dog"), Al drove his son over to the guy's house to throw hard green tomatoes through his windows and let the air out of his tires. Al just laughed at his son's antics, like when A.J. tipped a 60-year-old high-school social-studies teacher out a window. "It was only one story. Me and Chico threw her grade book out the window, and when she leaned out to get it we lifted her out by the legs."

"People are afraid of me," A.J. continues, making it not sound like bragging. And then he proceeds to give examples.

There was the time he offered to rough up the playboy Steven Greenberg because Greenberg called A.J.'s then-boss, Linda Stasi, a very bad word. "If he'd just called her a bitch, I might've let it go, but I can't have that." (The men patched up their differences later.)

There was the time when a Farrakhan fanatic offered to teach A.J. a lesson for breaking the news that the Nation of Islam leader started his career as a calypso singer with a hit about a transvestite titled "Is You Is or Is You Ain't?" "Come and get me," A.J. says he told the caller. "I'll be at the corner of 42nd and Seventh. I'm the Italian guy with slicked-back hair." The caller didn't appear.

And there was the time a "lunatic lawyer" turned up at the *Daily News* with his feet on A.J.'s desk, demanding a correction A.J. didn't think was warranted. "Go buy yourself a better toupee; you look like Dondi," A.J. told the attorney, flinging a fistful of change at his head. "You're not doing so well yourself with the hair, kid," retorted the intruder. (A.J. has confided to his readers his "concern over male-pattern baldness.") "But it's funny," he says. "If I want to know if I think a girl's really pretty, I try to imagine what she'd look like bald."

Then there was the time a few weeks ago when A.J. threatened Nick Paumgarten, a writer who made the mistake of going ahead with a profile on him for the New York *Observer* after A.J. had told him he'd already pledged his loyalty to a *New York* Magazine profile. Also, Paumgarten was calling up to check on some unflattering (and, as it turned out, untrue) stories about A.J. "I said I wasn't some Oxford-wearing J-school graduate and I wasn't going to be doing this forever," A.J. confessed after getting off the phone with Paumgarten. "I said if he went that low on that story, he was going to have to look over his shoulder for the rest of his life."

"A.J.," I said. "He's going to put that in his article."

"Hey," A.J. said. "I told him it was off the record."

Paumgarten declined to comment on the exchange, which he did not report; neither did he report any of the unflattering stories.

Then there was the time, a week later, when A.J. threatened me. I'd spent a whole night watching him collect stories, never setting pen to paper, so I teased him: "Don't you ever take any notes?"

A.J. pointed to his head.

"I got it all in here."

"What are you?" I laughed. "Truman Capote?"

A.J. turned, his black eyes like marbles, and stuck a finger in my face. "I'll never hit a woman. But just remember—I *know* people."

A few minutes later, A.J. had the hands on my arm and my back. "You hurt me," he said, all puppy dog. "I'm a good reporter."

A dancer sits down with us at Scores. She's about 22, wearing a long green halter gown that barely covers her nipples. "Hi, A.J.!" Kiss, kiss.

A.J. stares at her and frowns. "How'd you get that bump on your head?"

"Trashing my boyfriend's apartment." A fluttering hand covers the swollen spot on her forehead.

"Yeah, right," A.J. says. "Why don't you know better?"

"What does a Jewish stockbroker want with her?" he asks ruefully when she's out of earshot. A.J.'s drinking red wine. He doesn't do drugs or even smoke, he says, but when he drinks, he drinks like a shark—constantly, steadily.

Maybe it's the setting that brings this out of him, but A.J. starts talking about how he "had to marry a virgin." He'd been married to a junior-high-school teacher for five years when their union began to unravel. "I was married to Mary Ann, and now I wanted to fuck Ginger."

So he started driving into the city from Long Island every night to check out the clubs, to make the scene. By this time, he'd gone legit and survived a stint selling "TV guides and shit" over the telephone, and for a full seven years had been working at New York *Newsday* at night as a part-time high-school and college sportswriter.

"I was fucking nowhere," A.J. says. "There were some stuffy old men [at *Newsday*] who were just very afraid to let A.J. be A.J." He'd done some memorable work, though, covering the trial of John Gotti in 1990. His access to the mob boss's inner circle came through what F. Scott Fitzgerald called "a gonnegtion." "I have a third cousin," A.J. says. "He knew the right people and everybody liked each other and helped each other out and that kind of shit."

"It's so funny how life is," A.J. says. "I found out that the most powerful, sinister criminals in the world, No. 1, have big hearts and are very funny, and No. 2, when their fate is resting in the jury's hands and they walk across the street from this restaurant [Giambone's], they were making fart jokes in the park. I know he was concerned about his life, but here was John Gotti, 'Sammy the Bull' Gravano, Bobby Borriello, farting in the park and making jokes about it. It was just so cool, if you wrote it into a movie you'd say it was bullshit. . . ."

When stories like this one were ignored by his *Newsday* editors, A.J. vowed he'd show them. "I said bullshit. I'm never going to go and live in fucking Texas for three years covering crime blotters. I'll stick it out here." Newly separated from his wife, A.J. embarked on the beginning of a new beginning: He "made his bones" as a gossip.

"It's '91," he says, "and both parents are dead, I got no wife, and now I start going into the city. I started going out like crazy, dating everybody. I mean, I was dating every girl. I wanted to know what

Photograph by Larry Fink.

redheads were like, what blondes were like. Every time there was a girl I thought was cute, I dated her.

“And I started to see some cool shit at night, and I started being infatuated with it. Celebrities and athletes, SoHo, Tatou, the Palladium, Metro C.C. I couldn't get into a lot of these places—it was so frustrating.

“But it all changed for me in April '92. It was *Vogue*'s a-hundredth-birthday party at the New York Library. I crashed it. I didn't know anybody there. But I said fuck it, I'm getting in. And I got in. I wouldn't know Anna Wintour if she bit me on the ass.

“So I'm crashing it. I look to my left and Mickey Rourke's crashing it, too, and he was one of my favorite actors. He and I start talking—he's crashing 'cause he and his girlfriend at the time [and now his wife], Carre Otis, were fighting, and he was banned from getting in. So we're talking, and he says, ‘I'm gonna go to Metro C.C. afterwards, that's where the party's going,’ and I went with him.

“And I saw a lot of hot shit at that party—I'll never say their names, but I saw supermodels making out with supermodels. It blew my mind. . . . I came from a world where I was at my in-laws' house watching Bill Cosby on a Thursday night with crumb cake and coffee, and all of a sudden I'm at Metro C.C., watching the biggest names in modeling, women, making out with each other all night long? It blew my mind. So I called Linda Stasi the next day—she was writing for ‘Inside New York’ at New York *Newsday*—and I told her, ‘I saw something last night. . . .’ ”

Stasi hired him as her legs. “He was consumed with going out,” she says. “He was unique, a real character. And I figured, let him fly.” In 1992, she brought A.J. with her to the *Daily News* when she started “Hot Copy.” (Co-gossip Michael Lewittes came onboard a month later.) Last year, when Stasi started writing her eponymous *Daily News* column, Benza and Lewittes took over “Hot Copy,” and Benza simultaneously began doing his solo “Downtown.”

“Let's get out of here,” A.J. says, throwing down a twenty. A.J. always leaves $20 tips. He won't let me pay for anything, even though we're here on business and I could get reimbursed by the magazine.

“I just don't like that,” he grumbles, “—girls paying.”

A.J.'S DUPLEX APARTMENT ON MADISON AND 37th Street explodes with little dogs—three Yorkshire terriers named Cesare, Mercedes, and Marcella. Every month, A.J. takes them down to Le Chien on First Avenue, where “they get nice.” Their toenails clatter on the parquet as they follow A.J. around in a pack. “This is how I am every night.” He lies down on an avocado leather couch in front of the television. Cesare, Mercedes, and Marcella jump up and arrange themselves on his leg, stomach, and chest, respectively. “They fucking love me.

“This one is the best.” He picks up Cesare like a football by the back of the neck. The dog goes limp. “He'll let me do anything to him.” He dangles Cesare by his hind legs so the dog looks dead. A.J. laughs and lets him down. Cesare runs off, grabs a stray sock, and growls as A.J. comes to get it.

“You some kind of badass?” His voice echoes through the apartment. The dog growls like the buzz of a swarm of gnats.

“HOT COPY” ISN'T NECESSARILY considered the best column in the city, but A.J. and Michael—“the Fonz and Richie,” as one colleague describes them—have made it a contender. “There are some days when their page looks as good as or better than our page,” says fellow *Daily News* columnist George Rush (who, with his wife, Joanna Molloy, writes “Rush & Molloy”).

The “Hot Copy” office is strewn with *Playboy* and *Penthouse* magazines, and as any viewer of *The Gossip Show* can tell you, the wall behind A.J.'s desk is littered with photos of women with large breasts.

The fax machine whirs with incoming press releases. The “boys,” as Stasi once called them, sit glued to the phones, Lewittes mouthing conspiratorially into the receiver, A.J. barking at whoever's on the speaker.

“Gimme something really dirty today.” A.J.'s talking to a female publicist. “Don't you handle anybody really filthy?”

“Well,” she squeaks from the box, “I got this [medium-level actress]—”

“What?” A.J. asks. “*Who?*”

“She's in [medium-level movie] and she's half-naked all the time from the waist up. . . .”

Not dirty enough.

“You get the publicists who'll sell out their clients, and you're set,” chuckles A.J. “It's all a trade-off: I run some bullshit thing, then they give me something hot.”

Soon though, A.J. is berating another female publicist. “You don't get me shit,” A.J. says. “You don't get me nothing.”

“What about that [item about who's dating a famous actress]?” she says.

“That was fucking three weeks ago. Now go and get me something!”

“A.J.,” she says with a sigh.

He turns and winks at me. “Gotta make 'em work.”

A.J. leans back. He's wearing silky black pants and a gray untucked shirt hanging to his knees. “My flowing look,” he says of the outfit, delivered to his office via messenger from Donna Karan at, A.J. smiles, *a greatly reduced price.*

“Hey,” he says, “I still wrote that her men's-wear line wasn't doing too well.”

A call comes in: Khoi Nguyen, an assistant at the rival “Page Six,” has been detained for possessing marijuana as he got off a plane headed to a Caribbean island. “Yes!” Lewittes says after hanging up with the FBI.

A.J.'s thinking, rubbing his nose. “Aah, we don't want to start a fucking gossip war,” A.J. says. “Someday, maybe they'll have some shit on us.”

“Yeah, you're right,” says Lewittes after a moment. “But I just like knowing it.”

“And that *he* knows *we* know it, and we didn't print it,” says A.J. (The story is later published in this magazine's “Intelligencer.”)

A.J. is wearing his shiniest patent-leather shoes today. (Not the clogs. Not the boots with I.D. bracelets.) They make him look like a dance instructor.

NAOMI SWAGGERS DOWN THE CATWALK IN A corset so tight and teeny-tiny, the men are making Fred Flintstone–like howls. A.J.'s perched at the very end of the runway, his normally darting eyes arrested just now by the approach of Naomi's endless, rippling thighs.

Last Tuesday was the Super Bowl of my existence: Front-row seats at the Victoria's Secret runway show at the Plaza, he wrote in “Downtown” that Sunday.

Naomi gives A.J. an acid look, turns sharply on her stilettos, and struts away, her hard rear end shaking out an admonition that seems aimed at him.

“I gotta talk to her.” A.J. smears on some Chapstick.

I ventured backstage only to suffer whiplash, lockjaw and a troublesome bout of sweaty palms.

In the back room of the fashion show, half-naked supermodels—Frederique, Stephanie Seymour, Veronica Webb, and on and on—are voguing it up for photographers. Everybody's loving it. A.J., perhaps, most of all.

I was paralyzed. But, let's face it, there are worse things in life.

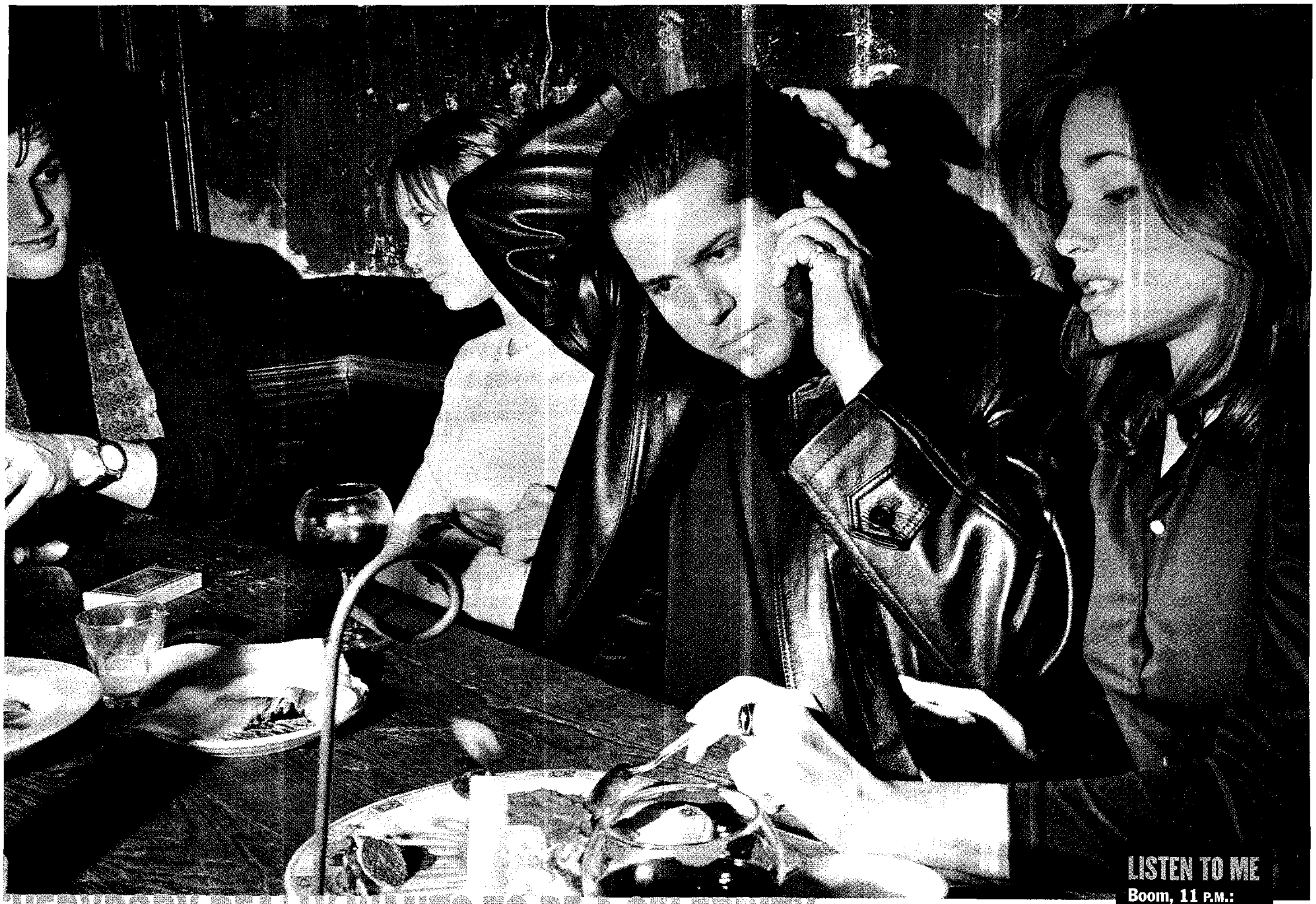
“Hi, A.J., I saw you on E!” flirts model Saira Mohan.

“Hey, baby,” A.J. says.

“A.J., I'm so mad at you,” pouts 22-year-old supermodel Tyra Banks, prom-queen-cute in a ponytail. A.J. ticked her off by writing that she was upset, along with other black models, when Whitney Houston got the January cover of *Harper's Bazaar.*

“That is so totally not me,” Tyra says. “I'm happy for any girl who gets a cover.”

“Hey, baby,” A.J. says, “I didn't mean to do that”—that is, not phone Banks to



LISTEN TO ME
Boom, 11 P.M.: A.J. still has a few calls to make.

VERYBODY REALLY WANTS TO BE A CELEBRITY. We all have those dreams. I just want to be heard. I want to be out there. I want people to hear my ice and see my face. I want to die and people to say, YEAH, I KNOW THAT GUY."

check on whether he should include her in the item. "I fucked up. But you'll see that in print."

"I want it on TV," Tyra says levelly.

A.J. promises: "Done."

"I think it's wonderful Whitney got it," Ms. two-covers-this-month-alone scolded me.

Naomi's going to be harder to soothe. Although A.J.'s never met her, he runs items making fun of her relentlessly. He calls her "one of my targets," and he's tweaked her attempted singing career, her TV roles ("Alert the Emmy board," he quipped), her "alleged" novel, *Swan.* When Campbell was engaged to Adam Clayton of U2, A.J. printed that if she ever became the Yoko Ono of the group, he would "personally hunt her down like a dog in the streets."

Fifteen cameras flash at their face-off.

"You know, I think you're really cool," A.J. says, "and I just don't want you to be scared of me."

"No man scares me," said the woman who toyed with Mike Tyson as a 19-year-old. After that riposte, I just couldn't bring myself to ask her about her latest development in her music career, which I do think is scary.

"I think you can take my sense of humor better than most people," A.J. says.

"That's probably true," says Naomi.

They smile.

"I SAW THE DAILIES," A.J. TELLS ME.

We're at Cafe Tabac, upstairs. It's pretty empty. A.J.'s drinking espresso and Sambuca. A.J. wants to talk about seeing the dailies of his scene in *Ransom.*

"I think in my whole life it's the best thing. To sit down on a Saturday in this little theater next to Mel Gibson and Ron Howard and Renée Russo, and see me on screen talking to Mel Gibson, hearing Ron Howard saying 'Cut' and 'Good take' and 'That's a wrap' and 'Print it.' It's like, 'Is this fucking happening?' "

This is what A.J. Benza has always wanted.

"Always, since I was a little boy." Once, back when he was still married—and going to college, and being a bookie, and slogging away at *Newsday*—A.J. did a role on the pilot of *Loving.*

"I remember Lloyd Bridges's eyes were blue like sapphires," A.J. says.

The writing, sure—people always told him he could write. "Even his letters," says his ex-wife, Jennifer, "could make you laugh or cry."

But, A.J. says, "everybody really wants to be a celebrity." His craggy face looks haunted in the candlelight. "We all have those dreams.

"I just want to be heard," A.J. says. He is leaning across the table, grabbing my arm. "I want to be out there. I want people to hear my voice and see my face. I want to die and people to say, 'Yeah, yeah, yeah, I know that guy, and here's proof.

" 'Here he was, and here's the kind of shit he did.' "

Nancy Jo Sales is a correspondent for People *magazine.*

Photograph by Larry Fink.

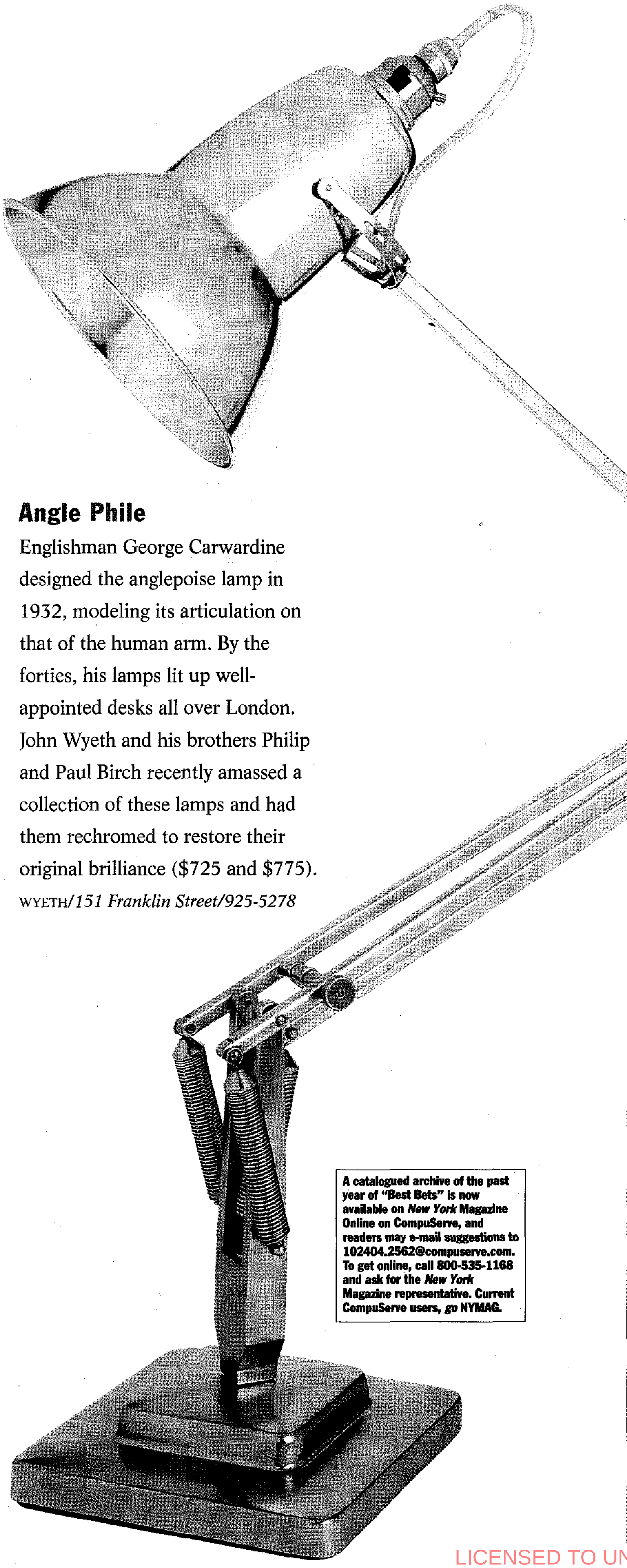
BEST BETS

BY CORKY POLLAN

Restoration Comity

Frank Rogin is a furniture restorer; his mother, Anne, a former art-gallery owner. Their fascination with early-twentieth-century modern design has culminated in the Frank Rogin gallery. The restrained interior, by Italian designer Paolo Bonfini, is an ideal backdrop for the collection of easy-to-live-with furniture. There are a number of recognizable names here (a Gio Ponti cherrywood desk, an Oscar Bach iron bench, and a Guglielmo Ulrich palmwood-and-leather bookcase), but mostly the stock is a mix of anonymous French and Italian pieces from the twenties and thirties (from $750 for a French modernist dining chair to $20,000 for a Gio Ponti office suite).

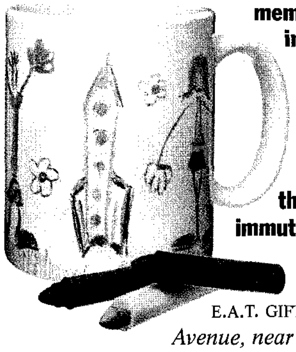
FRANK ROGIN INC./*21 Mercer Street/431-6545*



Angle Phile

Englishman George Carwardine designed the anglepoise lamp in 1932, modeling its articulation on that of the human arm. By the forties, his lamps lit up well-appointed desks all over London. John Wyeth and his brothers Philip and Paul Birch recently amassed a collection of these lamps and had them rechromed to restore their original brilliance ($725 and $775).
WYETH/*151 Franklin Street/925-5278*

Microwave Memories



Design A Mug may conjure up memories of those plates a lot of us crayoned as kids—the ones parents would send off somewhere to have our scribbles memorialized in nearly indestructible plastic. BananAppeal has updated the notion. Now Mom and Dad can simply pop crayoned mugs into the microwave for an immutable (and useful) sample of their kids' artwork ($10).
E.A.T. GIFTS/*1062 Madison Avenue, near 80th Street/861-2544*

Fanny and Zoë

Indoor plumbing has been around for centuries, but in all that time, the toilet seat has remained substantially the same. Toto, a Japanese manufacturer of technologically advanced bathroom fixtures, has just introduced Zoë, a strikingly new sort of seat that's ergonomically designed, has an air feature intended to eliminate odor, and operates somewhat like a bidet, bathing the user with a stream of water. A handheld remote control regulates the warm-water flow ($600).
MOSS/*146 Greene Street/226-2190*

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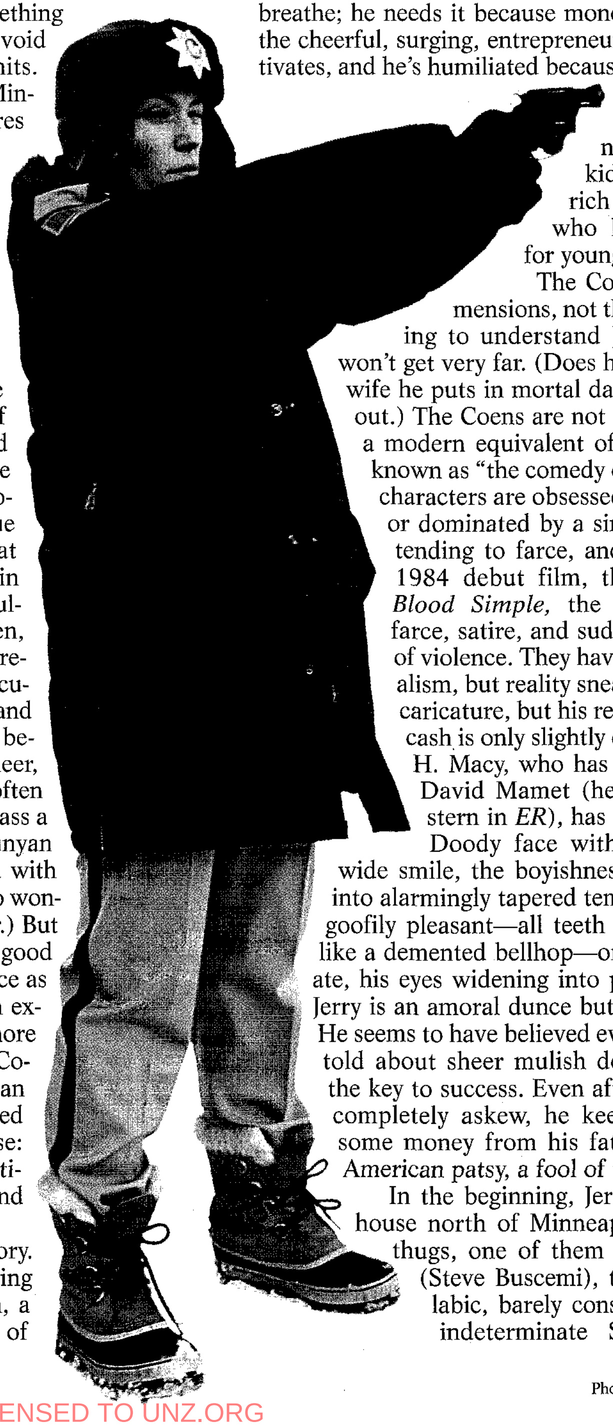
MOVIES DAVID DENBY

Wonder Bread Cantata

The Coen brothers' new film traffics in their trademark hipster deadpan. But 'Fargo' turns out to be much more: a meditation on faith and courage.



Frances McDormand as police chief Marge Gunderson: Resolute, monosyllabic.

IN THE DEAD OF WINTER, A CAR DRIVES TOWARD US through white fields and white air, a whiteness so enveloping that we cannot tell where ground and air meet. The brilliant opening shot of **Fargo**—a devastating new comedy-thriller from Joel and Ethan Coen—suggests something unspeakably sinister, a void without gradation or limits. *Fargo,* it turns out, is about a Minneapolis auto salesman who hires two thugs to kidnap his wife. Why does he do this? So he can cop part of the ransom money he expects his rich father-in-law will pony up to get his daughter back, of course. This convoluted and nut-brained scheme results in five or six bodies lying dead in the snow. The white-on-white motif becomes a landscape of malevolence (one thinks of Robert Frost and his "dimpled spider, fat and white, on a white heal-all . . ."). As always, the Coens work in a vein of grotesque satire; *Fargo* pokes nasty fun at the blandness of white folks in Minnesota, the Wonder-bread culture in which men and women, largely of Scandinavian descent, rely on such repeated gee-gosh locutions as "That's a heckuva deal" and "You bet!" Horrible things lie beneath the relentless good cheer, which is where horrible things often reside in art films. (When cars pass a statue of the mythical Paul Bunyan standing at the side of the road with his tree-chopping ax, we begin to wonder what else Bunyan used it for.) But the movie also suggests that good things may lie beneath the surface as well. *Fargo* is not completely an exercise in attitude; the movie is more than mere hipster sarcasm. The Coens (Joel writes and directs; Ethan writes and produces) have created an unusual kind of suspense: When is blandness really fortitude? When is it faith and courage?

Fargo is based on a true story. The man driving in the opening shot is an automobile salesman, a lineal descendant, I suppose, of Arthur Miller's Willy Loman, but even more desperate and empty. Jerry Lundegaard (William H. Macy) needs money very badly. He's in debt, and he's also trying to close a real-estate deal, but none of that is really the point. Jerry *needs money.* He needs it in order to breathe; he needs it because money is the lifeblood of the cheerful, surging, entrepreneurial style that he cultivates, and he's humiliated because he's forever dependent on his father-in-law (Harve Presnell), the target of the kidnapping scheme—a rich but stony old man who has great contempt for young Jerry.

The Coens work in two dimensions, not three, and anyone trying to understand Jerry's "psychology" won't get very far. (Does he hate the twittering wife he puts in mortal danger? We never find out.) The Coens are not realists; their style is a modern equivalent of the dramatic mode known as "the comedy of humors," in which characters are obsessed with a single desire or dominated by a single trait. It's a style tending to farce, and starting with their 1984 debut film, the similarly plotted *Blood Simple,* the Coens have mixed farce, satire, and sudden, brute outbursts of violence. They have never embraced realism, but reality sneaks in. Jerry may be a caricature, but his remorseless hunger for cash is only slightly exaggerated. William H. Macy, who has worked widely with David Mamet (he's also Dr. Morgenstern in *ER*), has an American Howdy Doody face with thick jowls and a wide smile, the boyishness persisting upward into alarmingly tapered temples. Macy can look goofily pleasant—all teeth and eager attention, like a demented bellhop—or agonizingly desperate, his eyes widening into pools of despair. His Jerry is an amoral dunce but a very eager beaver. He seems to have believed everything he was ever told about sheer mulish determination's being the key to success. Even after his plan has gone completely askew, he keeps plotting to grab some money from his father-in-law. He's the American patsy, a fool of the success ethos.

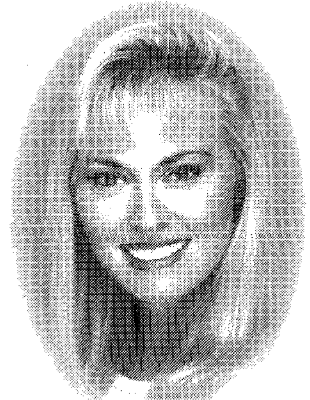
In the beginning, Jerry arrives in a roadhouse north of Minneapolis and meets two thugs, one of them a jumpy little creep (Steve Buscemi), the other a monosyllabic, barely conscious stone killer of indeterminate Scandinavian origin

Photograph by Grammercy Pictures.

(Peter Stormare). The pale, cadaverous Buscemi has the ultimate Steve Buscemi role—a criminal convinced that he's the only rational person in the world. Buscemi's punk is highly puzzled by Jerry's scheme of kidnap and ransom. Why doesn't Jerry just *ask* his father-in-law for the money? Buscemi's demand that crime make sense becomes a running joke in this peculiar north-country world, in which the conversational engine turns over and over but never catches fire. As the Coens see it, people in northern Minnesota are so devoted to surface pleasantness and to saying as little as possible that they don't notice the abyss opening at their feet. This is the dark side of "A Prairie Home Companion."

Joel Coen stages the scenes as a deadpan comedy of squareness. It's a risky style, and some of the moose-brained exchanges (Question: "Yah?" Answer: "Yahhhhh . . .") come close to the kind of revue-sketch jeering that Dave Thomas and Rick Moranis regularly indulged in on *SCTV.* Just when the satire is approaching burlesque, Frances McDormand (who is Mrs. Joel Coen) turns up as police chief Marge Gunderson, and we see that blandness may have a hidden meaning. Marge is married to a stolid, wordless fellow who paints wildlife scenes for postage stamps; the two of them make dull sounds just like everyone else, but they're utterly devoted to each other, as cuddlesome as hibernating bears. Marge is pregnant, but she's got a job, and she goes out on the freezing road to investigate a triple murder. When she gets there, exchanging monosyllables with her deputy, she abruptly issues Sherlock-like deductions about what has happened. The joke deepens: Sometimes north-country mulishness is a form of wit.

The farce keeps sliding into horror, as it always does in Coen Brothers movies. When Jerry's wife is sitting at home, the kidnappers, dressed in black mufti, walk right up to her porch, as if they were delivering milk. Later, the more violent of the thugs plugs a state trooper, and then, with grim determination, drives after two witnesses passing by in their car so he can plug them too. The Coens have given crime back to the amateurs: Violence, in their movies, just *happens,* with shocking bluntness and slovenliness. The brothers practice what might be called metaphysical cruelty: The world is simply not a place in which these people can do anything right, including kidnapping and murder. In the past, when their touch was off, the Coens have produced passages of mannerist weirdness. But *Fargo* stays lean. It's a fable of good and evil in which the pregnant Marge gets to restore order, one syllable at a time. She discovers a modern Paul Bunyan, and she takes him into custody. ■



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Buried Treasure

'Floyd Collins' is a thoroughly modern musical powerhouse; A. R. Gurney's 'Overtime' is a laborious Shakespearean sitcom.

YOU WOULD THINK THAT THE STORY OF FLOYD Collins, a spelunker trapped deep underground, and the efforts to rescue him would work fine in the movies—as was demonstrated by Billy Wilder's powerful *Ace in the Hole.* But surely not as a stage musical! **Floyd Collins,** with music and lyrics by Adam Guettel, and book, additional lyrics, and direction by Tina Landau, shows otherwise. This is *the* original and daring musical of our day, concerned with saying something in words and music, not merely bringing in da noise or paying the rent.

Following with reasonable but unslavish fidelity the events in Barren County from January 30 to February 16, 1925—the subterranean engulfment of Floyd Collins, eager to discover a lucrative tourist attraction near his old Kentucky farm, and the ensuing rescue operations that turned into a media circus—the musical finds a smashing meeting place for suspense, comedy, and social criticism. Also for fact and fantasy, wry humor, and stoic endurance. "Something for everybody" can easily denote a cynical commercial potboiler; in the case of *Floyd Collins,* it designates a truly national work and a rare case of high art, generally elitist by nature, proving itself genuinely democratic.

Take, first, the music. Adam Guettel is the grandson of Richard and son of Mary Rodgers, a third-generation musical-comedy man. But don't look for echoes of *Oklahoma!* or *Once Upon a Mattress* here. Better yet, don't look for similarities to Sondheim, Lloyd Webber, or Boublil and Schönberg—the tripartite division of contemporary musical theater, as painful as the partition of Poland. Here, starting appropriately with bluegrass, adding Tin Pan Alley when the rescue operation becomes a sideshow, and pushing through to the use of music as authentic mood-painting as in modern opera, we have something that will not be easily and confiningly pinned down, yet cannot be dismissed as magpie eclecticism. It is not always tuneful in, say, the Kern or Puccini mode, as today's opera can no longer be, either; but it finds a personal amalgam of melody, rhythm, and arrangement that transcends expectation and subserves the action.

The lyrics, likewise, are neither dazzlingly clever à la Sondheim, nor sweetly predictable à la so many other Americans, nor yet defiantly prosaic à la sundry Brits. They display a happy openness to all sorts of possibilities, with an emphasis on the functional: how best to tell the story, how best to develop character, how best to get a point across. If the songs resemble anything, it is Louis Kahn or Alvar Aalto. Schelling called architecture frozen music; here we have music as melting architecture: not gaudy, but perhaps a touch Gaudí.

The book, too, is remarkable. It manages to convey both underground horror and the frenzy above; both the agonizing crawl of time below and the deadly ur-

Photograph by Joan Marcus.

gency above ground. Using a cast of thirteen (and some doubling) and the standard length for a two-act musical, Tina Landau has given us a portrait of America where disaster becomes a spectator sport and drama can as easily hurtle into tragedy as slide into farce. And by being her own director, she was able to write as much with the staging in mind as to direct with the script at heart. Here everyone is a winner.

Well, perhaps not the character of Nellie Collins, Floyd's teched sister. Whether it is the role or its interpreter, Theresa McCarthy, something about Nellie is hard to take: She is less the elemental voice of feeling, as she may have been intended, than a somewhat cloddish clown. But everyone else hits the bull's-eye: Christopher Innvar as the unidealized, nakedly human Floyd; Don Chastain as his profoundly ambiguous father; Cass Morgan as his staid but solicitous stepmother; Jason Danieley as his stalwart yet eventually discouraged brother; Martin Moran as the initially exploitative but subsequently engaged reporter; Michael Mulheren as the bullying entrepreneur in charge of digging the shaft; and all the exemplary others.

Add to this a set by James Schuette that is both ingenious and simple, costumes by Melina Root that command respect without attracting undue attention; and lighting by Scott Zielinski that conjures up darkness as compellingly as daylight. Dan Moses Schreier's sound and Bruce Coughlin's orchestrations, along with Ted Sperling's sensitive conducting of the versatile eight-piece band, make further first-rate contributions. Unlike several other overtouted and underachieving current musicals, *Floyd Collins* re-establishes America's sovereignty in a genre it created but has since lost hold of: It is the modern musical's true and exhilarating ace in the hole.

JUST AS NEIL SIMON HAS ALWAYS SEEMED TO be explaining Jews to the goyim, A. R. Gurney has been interpreting Wasps for the Jews. Aside from their other functions, the two playwrights have had these (conscious or unconscious) missions. "Look how lovable Jews are underneath their *mishegoss*" and "Look how touching Wasps are inside their petrifaction" were the twin messages being emitted. It became a bit of a bore, and Simon tried a couple of other things, not very successfully. So did Gurney, with *Another Antigone,* one of his worst plays, and now **Overtime,** another of them. When a missionary drops his zeal, it is almost as embarrassing as when a comic drops his pants.

Overtime is an epilogue to *The Merchant of Venice,* Shakespeare's most manhandled play. Countless are the revisions, new versions, and tendentious restagings

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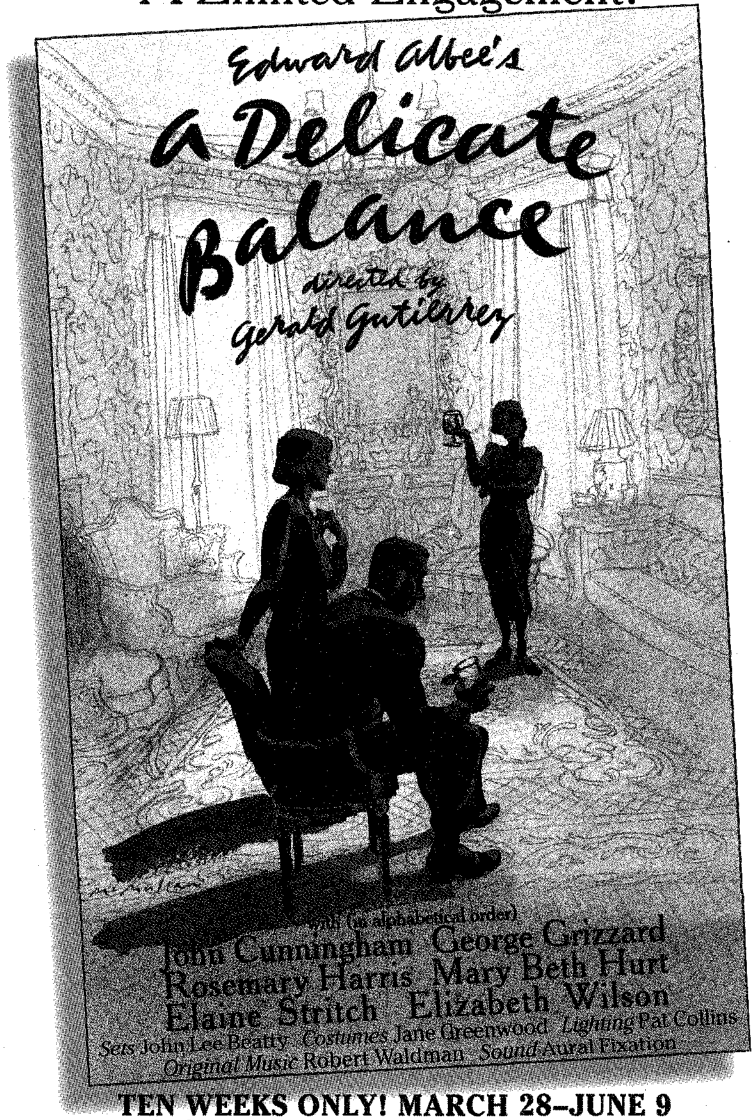
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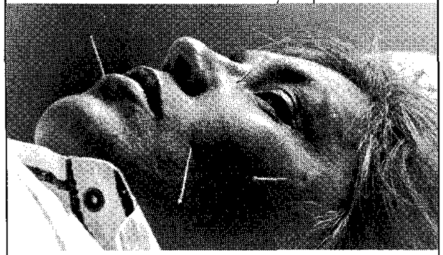

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Return to Aztlan
(In Necuepalizili in Aztlan/Retorna a Aztlan)
Juan Mora Catlett, Mexico. 1991.

Sun Mar 10, 2pm Fri Mar 15, 7pm
Patakin!
Manuel Octavio Gomez, Cuba. 1982.

Sat Mar 16, 2pm Sun Mar 17, 2pm
The Language of Foxes
(La Lengua de los Zorros)
Federico Garcia Hurtado, Peru. 1992.

Fri Mar 22, 7pm Sat Mar 23, 2pm
I, the Worst of All *(Yo, la Peor de Todas)*
Maria Luisa Bemberg, Argentina. 1990.

Fri Mar 29, 7pm Sat Mar 30, 2pm
The Other Francisco *(El Otro Francisco)*
Sergio Giral, Cuba. 1975.

Sun Mar 31, 2pm Fri Apr 5, 7pm
Jerico
Luis Alberto Lamata, Venezuela. 1990.

Sat Apr 6, 2pm Sun Apr 7, 2pm
One Way or Another *(De Cierta Manera)*
Sara Gomez, Cuba. 1974.

Fri Apr 12, 7pm Sat Apr 13, 2pm
The Devil Never Sleeps
(El Diablo Nunca Duerme)
Lourdes Portillo, US/Mexico. 1994.

Sun Apr 14, 2pm Fri Apr 19, 7pm
The Southern Cross *(La Cruz del Sur)*
Patricio Guzman, Chile/Spain. 1992.

Sat Apr 20, 2pm Sun Apr 21, 2pm
The Girl in the Watermelon
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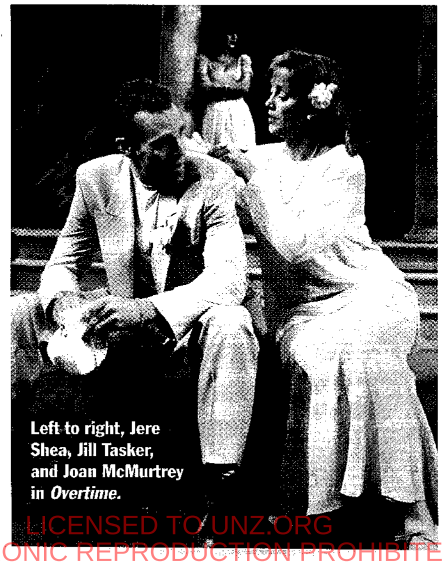
of it; innumerable are the rethinkings of the characters (Antonio and Bassanio as gay lovers, the Venetians as unrelievedly anti-Semitic swine, Shylock as the good guy abused by bad goys, etc.). Endless, too, are the updatings of the action, and the removals of the text from school-library shelves. It has even been seriously suggested that the play is no longer performable. So, by way of a putatively daring departure, Gurney gives us a quasi-sequel: part Renaissance Venice, part today's America; part plausible continuation, part farcical novelty; part quotations from the canon, part up-to-the-minute Gurney. One moment we hear "The quality of mercy is not strained"; the next, Lorenzo announces, "I want to be Jewish . . . that's why I asked for the complete works of Wendy Wasserstein." Regrettably, we can not make the same claim for Gurney's writing that Shakespeare makes for the quality of mercy.

How else would you describe a play that has Bassanio (who is Irish) decking his buddy Lorenzo (a Wasp whose anti-Semitism takes the form of frantic philo-Semitism) with the words "I had to do it, now that I have seen *Schindler's List*"? Portia is told, "You married a man who bankrupted his best friend in order to show up in an Armani suit and a second-hand Alfa Romeo." (Surely an Alfa Romeo is for wooing Juliet; for the Lady of Belmont, it's a Porsche.) Or take the recurrent list jokes. Hardly have we heard Nerissa's "I feel the noble blood of Montezuma coursing through my veins . . . Cervantes, Calderón, Gloria Estefan," than we get Portia being told, "Women like you are so important. Where would the world be without women like you . . . Homer's Penelope, Eleanor of Aquitaine, Kitty Carlisle Hart." And, about to run off to Switzerland with her accountant, the bankrupt Portia asks the bounced-back Shylock, "Do you know any Swiss?" Says he, "Just a family named Robinson. They changed it from Rubinstein"—which is as good as *Overtime* gets.

There are jokes about Episcopalians, Catholics, and Jews (Shylock: "If the



Left to right, Jere Shea, Jill Tasker, and Joan McMurtrey in *Overtime*.

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Photograph by Joan Marcus.

shoe fits, I can get it for you wholesale!"); about all sorts of nationalities, including Serbian (Salerio was born Salerović); about various professions, especially lawyers and accountants; and, of course, about blacks, Hispanics, and homosexuals. "It is infuriating," complains Portia. "The most attractive men in Venice all run off to the opera!" Asked whether he is sure he isn't gay, Lorenzo allows, "As sure as anyone can be in these ambiguous times." When his virility is impugned, Bassanio exclaims, "Then I know where I belong." "With [the self-confessed homosexual] Antonio?" "No. In the Marine Corps." And when Jessica leaves Lorenzo for a Chinese waiter, we switch to rhymed verse: "Who's Tommy Woo?" "I wish I knew." "Tommy who?" "Fuck you!" Even the Who's *Tommy* wouldn't stoop to that.

Decide for yourself whether you are low enough for this sort of comedy: One of the evening's biggest laughs comes on a pratfall by Salerio. Is there a point to all this? Only, I suspect, the rather mild fun poked at political correctness, expressed in vaudeville jokes sometimes preachily elevated into soapbox oratory. And is that enough? To quote Gurney's Shylock, "Time will tell. Or maybe *Newsweek*."

Good work here from Joan McMurtrey (despite her Kathie Lee Giffordishness), Michael Potts, Marissa Chibas (an enchanting Marissa, even if rattling off reams of Spanish is all the wit she's granted), Jill Tasker, Willis Sparks, Robert Stanton (though his Serbian accent is pure German), and Nicholas Kepros. Rocco Sisto (Antonio) and Jere Shea (Bassanio) are actors who can only look, not really act, their parts. Nicholas Martin has directed a bit overfrenziedly a production neatly designed by John Lee Beatty, Michael Krass, and Brian MacDevitt. But why a seemingly working onstage fountain that never performs? Is gag master Gurney afraid of being outspouted?

CONSIDERABLE CAST CHANGES HAVE TAKEN place in the deservedly long-running **Show Boat**. Andre Solomon-Glover, as Joe, sings as strongly as his predecessor, and acts more persuasively. The exquisite Lonette McKee has returned to the role of Julie. Carole Shelley brings a welcome touch of irony to the role of Parthy. John Cullum, the new Cap'n Andy, though good, seems less at home in comedy than in heroic roles. Sarah Pfisterer sings sweetly as Magnolia, but in other respects falls short of Rebecca Luker. Also new to me, Beth Leavel is a pleasing enough Ellie. The only clear loser is Hugh Panaro as Ravenal, a fine singer but terminally wimpy. All in all, though, *Show Boat* remains shipshape. ▬

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BOOKS **WALTER KIRN**

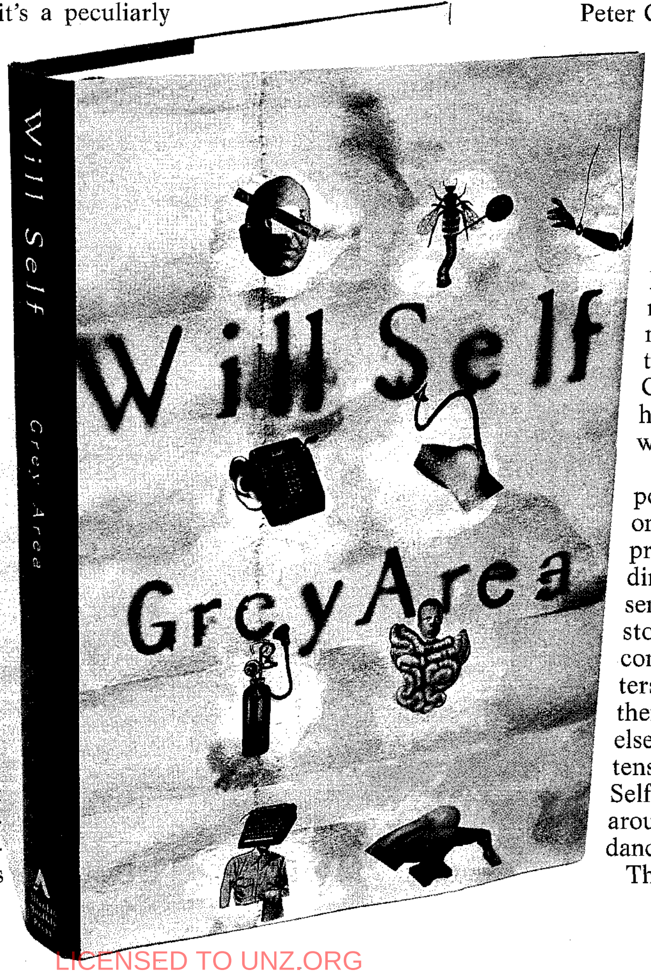
The Bodily-Fluid Bard

In richly poetic language, Will Self writes about deeply unattractive people doing deeply unattractive things—disgusting, by any other name.

Like A. M. Homes, Bret Easton Ellis, and Beavis, Will Self is compulsively fascinated with the repulsive.

Grey Area
BY WILL SELF
Atlantic Monthly Press; 287 pages; $22

THERE COMES A TIME IN THE LIFE OF EVERY 12-year-old when he learns, to his amusement and delight, that another word for sex is *copulation,* that chewing is also *mastication,* that turds are *excrement.* Will Self, a young English satirist of the hyperclever Martin Amis school, seems never to have outgrown these revelations. He's made a career of pubescent euphemism. Matching long words to low subjects, and framing both in big ideas, is to Self the soul of wit. In *Cock & Bull,* his notorious matched novella, a man grows a vagina, a woman a penis, and Self describes these metamorphoses with minute physiological precision. In *My Idea of Fun,* a novel, the hero fantasizes at a party—again in lofty Oxbridge tones—about beheading a subway passenger and then having sexual congress with the corpse's neck.



Courageous satire or elevated gross-out? For Self, they're one and the same, alas. *Grey Area* is Self's new book of stories, and it's a peculiarly numbing read, like being accosted by a brilliant sociopath who repeats himself in ever-widening circles. What's wearying isn't that everything disgusts Self—middle-class manners, the dreary English climate, modern psychiatry, faceless corporations; the usual suspects of Angry Young Anglo satire—but that everything disgusts him in the same way. If some English writers are repulsive snobs, Self is that new breed: a snob about repulsion. He writes of decay in the language of wine tasting, a connoisseur of nausea.

"Chest" is a tale of a futuristic England that's hopelessly polluted and befogged. It opens with characteristic overkill. "The pavement outside Marten's the newsagents was streaked with sputum. In the outrageously dull light of a mid-afternoon, in midwinter, in middle England, the loops and lumps of mucus and phlegm appeared strangely bright, lurid even, as if some Jackson Pollock of the pneumo-thorax had been practising Action Hawking."

Self's Englishmen are either boobs or paranoids, dullards or delusionals, and "Chest" is a story of two asthmatic boobs robotically keeping up social conventions despite the toxic mist enclosing them. After tucking the kids away in oxygen tents, they spend an evening passing around inhalers in lieu of cocktails. They chitchat over cough syrup. Outside, upper-class types hunt gas-mask-wearing pheasants. The birds drop dead of cancer. The people, too.

We get the point; it comes at us like a dentist's drill, with an insistent, motorized whine. Self is seldom subtle. Stories start with a wallop of revulsion, followed by queasy aftershocks. From "Incubus or the Impossibility of Self Determination as to Desire": "The altercation was on the verge of getting ugly—although not quite so ugly as the house. It concerned Peter Geddes's habit of employing the very tip of his little finger as a spatula with which to scoop out the fine, white rheum from the corners of his pink eyes. This he transferred to his moist mouth, again and again. Each fingerful was so Lilliputian a repast that he required constant refreshment." In other words, this man is unattractive. One wishes Self would have used those other words.

Geddes's ugliness compounds as "Incubus" goes on (he's another boob, a fat professor lusted after by a dimwit student), but our senses are sated. The mucus storm is blinding. To have contempt for one's characters is one thing; leaving them for dead is something else. Unless one has some intensely personal stake in Self's antipathies, why stick around to watch the corpses dance?

The anti-England that Self

describes is crushingly predictable: paradise inverted. Noses are always running. Streets are trash-strewn. The artists are frauds, the businessmen snakes, the doctors sadists, the old people monsters. No amount of crackling verbal lightning can shock this protoplasm into life. In "Grey Area," an anonymous female clerk employed by an anonymous corporation recounts her unchanging anonymous routine. As always in such corporate satires, the office folk have silly names attached to pompous titles: "Haines from purchasing; Thribble from sourcing."

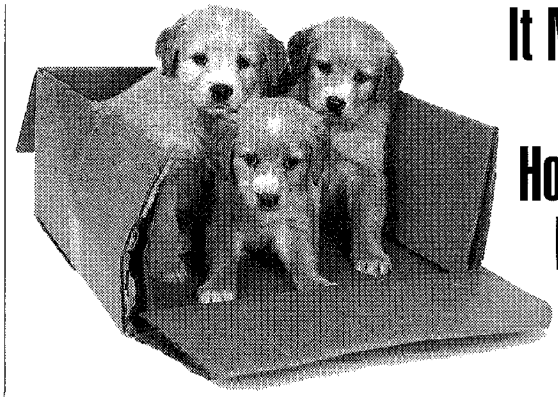
The clerk has two fears: that time has stopped (it has), and that she's been accidentally impregnated by an obese colleague (she hasn't been). Self breaks up this account of vapid meetings, stupid memos, and mindless busyness with his patented bacterial close-ups: "I stood for quite some time in front of the mirror, scrunging the insides of my thighs; catching up painful bunches of my own flesh and feeling the individual pores beneath my pincering fingertips. Then I pressed down hard on my belly with both palms and pushed a wave of flesh down to my pudenda."

The clerk also inspects a sanitary pad for a "brown smear" of menstrual blood and pictures her co-worker's "salty dollop" of semen on a "mushroom-shaped and mushroom-coloured toilet seat." In the end, as we've known it wouldn't, nothing happens in the story, except that we've been slimed for no good reason. Self clearly despises his characters, but one gets the sense he despises his readers too.

His panoramic revulsion is a mystery. What's its source? Its motive? Its direction? Johnny Rotten of the Sex Pistols also spat on fans, but at least we could understand what he was mocking: hero-worship, the cult of the Rock Star, pop music's descent into bubble-gum banality. Rotten made comedy of his lack of talent, but Self is too stuffy for such visceral anarchic jesting. His labored bathroom humor sits heavily. His images of social dolor ("Tenebrous people thronged the pavements, pacing out their stay in this pedestrian purgatory") are nothing if not consciously poetic.

Once or twice in the book Self sneers at English literature, deriding its baggy novels of manners and emptily sentimental poet laureates. But Self is a kind of empty laureate, too: superficially masterly, emotionally predictable. He substitutes phlegmy sidewalks for green fields and rheumy eyes for rosy cheeks, but it's the same rote equation, just different variables.

As in the work of the pipe-smoking fogeys he seems to loathe, Self's conclusions never question his premises—and Everything Stinks is as smug a presumption as Everything's Just Grand. ■



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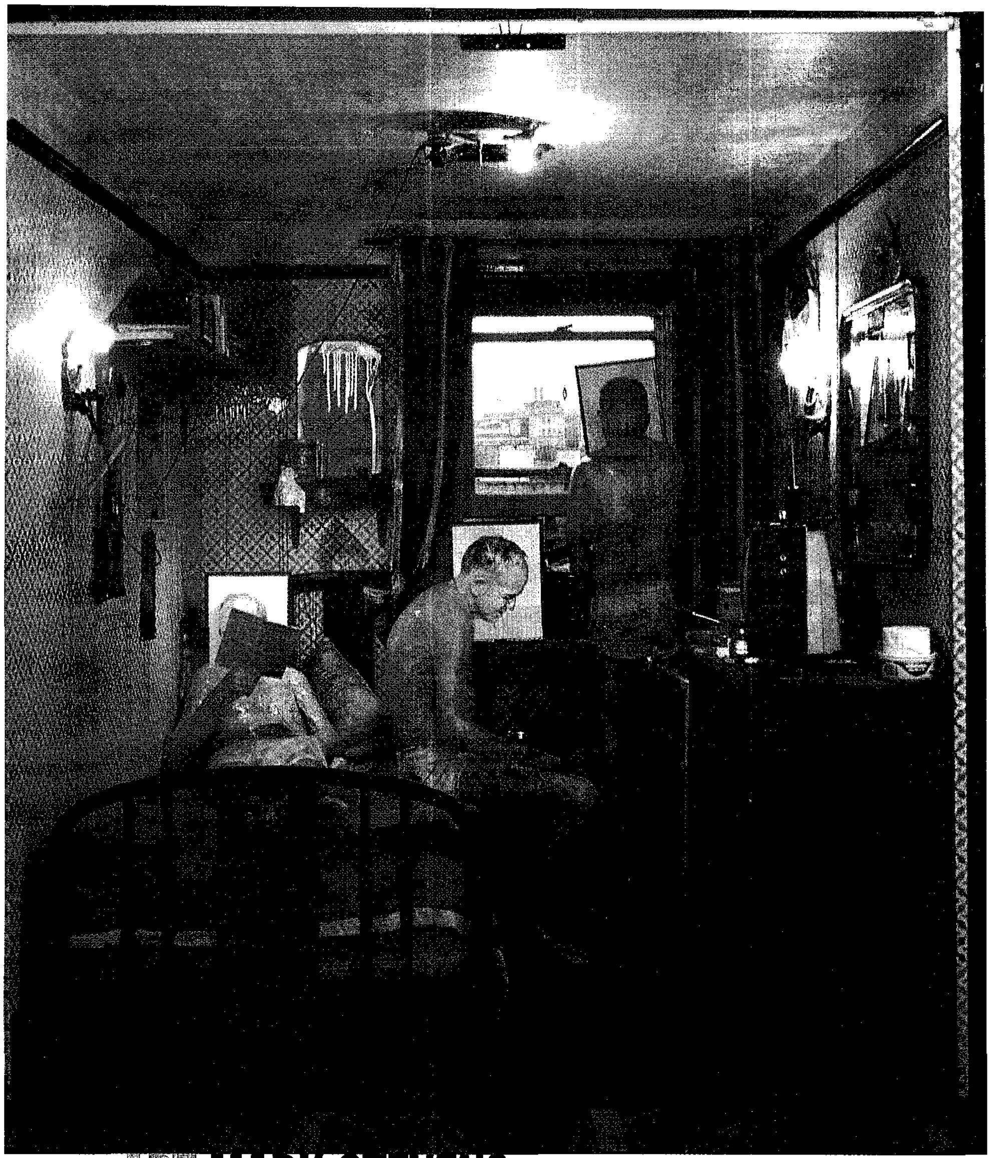

Sollie 17, Kienholz's sad commentary on the loneliness of old age.

ART **MARK STEVENS**

True Grit

Edward Kienholz's retrospective at the Whitney vividly portrays the dark side of the American dream.

FOR MANY PEOPLE IN THE ART WORLD, PARTICULARLY in Los Angeles, **Edward Kienholz** was a beloved and exemplary figure—the model of what an artist should be. He lived hard. He stayed angry. He did not compromise. He served as a kind of conscience (if that doesn't sound too earnest) during a period when the art world grew slick with money and fame. Not surprisingly, the catalogue for the current retrospective at the Whitney Museum of American Art has an unusually personal tone, as if the expansive memory of the man—who died in 1994 at the age of 66—were still paramount.

Nonetheless, the unsentimental question must be asked: To what extent will Kienholz's art continue to live with the man himself gone? There will probably never be a better opportunity to judge Kienholz's scabrous work, for the Whitney has given two entire floors to pieces that are often unwieldy in scale, difficult to install, and hard to understand in reproduction. One of the artist's oldest friends, the curator Walter Hopps, has organized and installed the show with the help of the artist's widow, Nancy Reddin Kienholz, who was Kienholz's full collaborator beginning in 1972. They have succeeded in bringing together most of the best-known works, along with many rarely seen pieces.

Kienholz grew up on a farm in the Northwest. His parents were Swiss. He never lost the handiness of a farm kid who is at home with machinery, though in most respects he seems the opposite of a well-behaved and tidy Swiss farmer. (The figures in one Kienholz have stopped clocks instead of faces.) With little formal art training, Kienholz, in the fifties, began painting in a heated Abstract Expressionist style. However, the movement later in the decade toward Pop, assemblage, and the Duchampian incorporation of found objects into works of art—a style often associated with artists like Rauschenberg and Johns—better suited his particular gifts. Soon, he began making the life-size "tableaux" for which he is celebrated.

Despite certain superficial similarities, Kienholz's work was very different from that done in New York during the sixties. This was partly a matter of personal temperature, both aesthetic and moral: Kienholz did not cool off, into irony and smart understatement, as did many New York artists. He retained the explosive warmth of Abstract Expressionism. A resolute Westerner suspicious of a fancy-pants New York—he developed his mature style in Los Angeles—he had little use for the epistemological musings of Johns, the paradoxical approach to popular culture of Andy Warhol, or the elegant modernist navel-gazing of color-field painters.

In his tableau called *The Art Show,* for example, Kienholz created a life-size version of a gallery in which the people browsing and admiring the fad of the moment have auto vents in their faces, the better to suggest the flow of hot air. (If you press a button, these art creatures will gas on about art in several languages.) His main obsession, however, was not with the art world—which was too foreign, small, and insular for a person with his sensibility—but with the dark side of the American dream.

Kienholz confronted this classic American subject in various ways, the most obvious of which was through an iconoclastic upending of routine pieties. In *The Portable War Memorial,* he juxtaposed the most famous American image of World War II—Marines raising the flag on Iwo Jima—with a diner, picnic tables, and various bitter symbols of war. (A blackboard lists 475 nations reduced to nothing, to the graffiti of history, by warfare.) What dis-

Photograph courtesy of the Whitney Museum of American Art.

tinguishes this work is that there is no disrespect paid to soldiers or the war dead; there is instead a biting anger that there should be so many wars, each diminished and made routine through patriotic platitudes and holiday picnics.

Demonstrating that the American reality does not live up to the American dream is itself a commonplace. What gives Kienholz's iconoclasm edge is the unexpected way in which he sharpens the usual points. He can be bitingly funny. His humor has a darkness very much of the fifties, something similar to the strange, dark, scatty, run-on intensity of Lenny Bruce. The line *Portable War Memorial* is funny even if the laugh hurts. And nothing exasperates piety like a bad or absurdist pun, such as *The Psycho-Vendetta Case,* which is a way to blow a raspberry in the church of language.

More important, Kienholz developed a visual style that challenged the sanitized "look" of American culture. If Los Angeles in the fifties gave a clean and glossy futuristic sheen to the American dream—in Technicolor movies, television, and the glint on a showroom Cadillac—Kienholz countered with an equally vivid dream of the mussy, the dirty, the dulled, and the shadowy. Like Raymond Chandler on the mean streets of L.A. or the Ash Can painters at the turn of the century, who reminded America of what has been forgotten or concealed, Kienholz developed a gritty street palette designed to trouble and irritate refined taste.

Certainly no artist of the period has a more visceral feeling for American *stuff.* Kienholz country is not a shelf of shiny consumer goods but a crammed closet, spilling out forgotten crud: Sam Walton's nightmare. Kienholz country overflows with old ashtrays, scuffed tables, used cars, peeling paint, old photographs, and used-up people. There is something desperately literal here, close to the primitive worship of relics, as if only by confronting and acknowledging the nightmarish fact—the hank of gristle and bone from the saint—will one be able to master the dark secret and salvage America's soul.

Several of Kienholz's images are also unforgettable. In *Sollie 17,* he is Edward Hopper's brother—noisy where Hopper is quiet, messy where he is spare, but with the same feeling for the loneliness of American spaces. *The Illegal Operation,* a horrific rendering of a back-street abortion, almost reeks of stale blood. Perhaps Kienholz's most powerful image, which almost perfectly unites fact and dream, is *The State Hospital.* In this often-photographed work (which must be seen in person to be appreciated), a beaten, tied-down, and naked inmate of an asylum dreams, vacantly, of himself. His head is a bowl of water in which swim two black goldfish, a terrifying image of a mind's eye without focus, lost to everything but itself.

Most Kienholz works, however, are too diagrammatic in their meaning—more calculated than inspired. The *Ozymandias Parade,* an enormous blinking piece that satirizes American leadership, suffers from this and from an uncharacteristic and grandiloquent pretension. (The title comes from Shelley's poem.) The sameness of Kienholz's tone can also be wearying in a show of this size, and the black humor seems to recede in his later art, which is a serious loss, for the humor is an enlivening foil for his outrage.

But an artist deserves to be remembered for his best work: Several of Kienholz's images define, brilliantly, corners of humanity's nightmare. He can't be dismissed as just another left-wing ideologue; his angry art is not really political—any more than the art of George Grosz finally is political—but stems from horror at the undeniable cruelty of human beings. Like Bruce Nauman, who owes much to him, Kienholz retains the capacity for outrage. He seems almost naïve and childish in his railing at the world—like all true expressionists, oddly tender. He called an early work *They Tarred and Feathered the Angel of Peace.*

Meyer Schapiro, WHO DIED LAST WEEK AT the age of 91, was a great art historian of many and varied accomplishments; the most exciting lecturer of his day; perhaps the preeminent intellectual in New York. But that was not why he mattered. Schapiro came to represent something more interesting than scholarly achievement. There was, in his outlook, a moral stance toward thought—a vision of what one would wish of the life of the mind.

His mind was powerful, but not confining: It opened outward. His curiosity was sharp-eyed and his appetite for learning limitless, so that he seemed a searching, rather than a settled or merely distinguished, man. His interest in detail, while legendary, was exuberant rather than airless. (The detail, in Schapiro's work, is a door.) His sense of responsibility toward tradition—the obligation to know what came before—seemed one with his responsibility to engage the modern era. His temper was radical but not ideological, which enabled him always to demand better of his time without growing cold and hard with answers.

Despite his great learning, Schapiro's intellect seemed not to dominate art but, on the contrary, to convey a certain humility before art's mysterious gifts. He had no patience for the way the wealthy and comfortable constantly presume upon art: His deepest sympathy was for the artist, whether that artist was a medieval sculptor or an abstract painter, who asserts essential values against those who would suppress the richness of experience. A word one often finds in his work is *avowal.* ■

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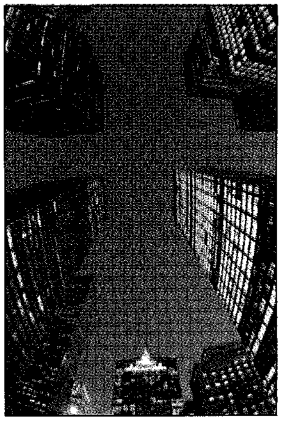

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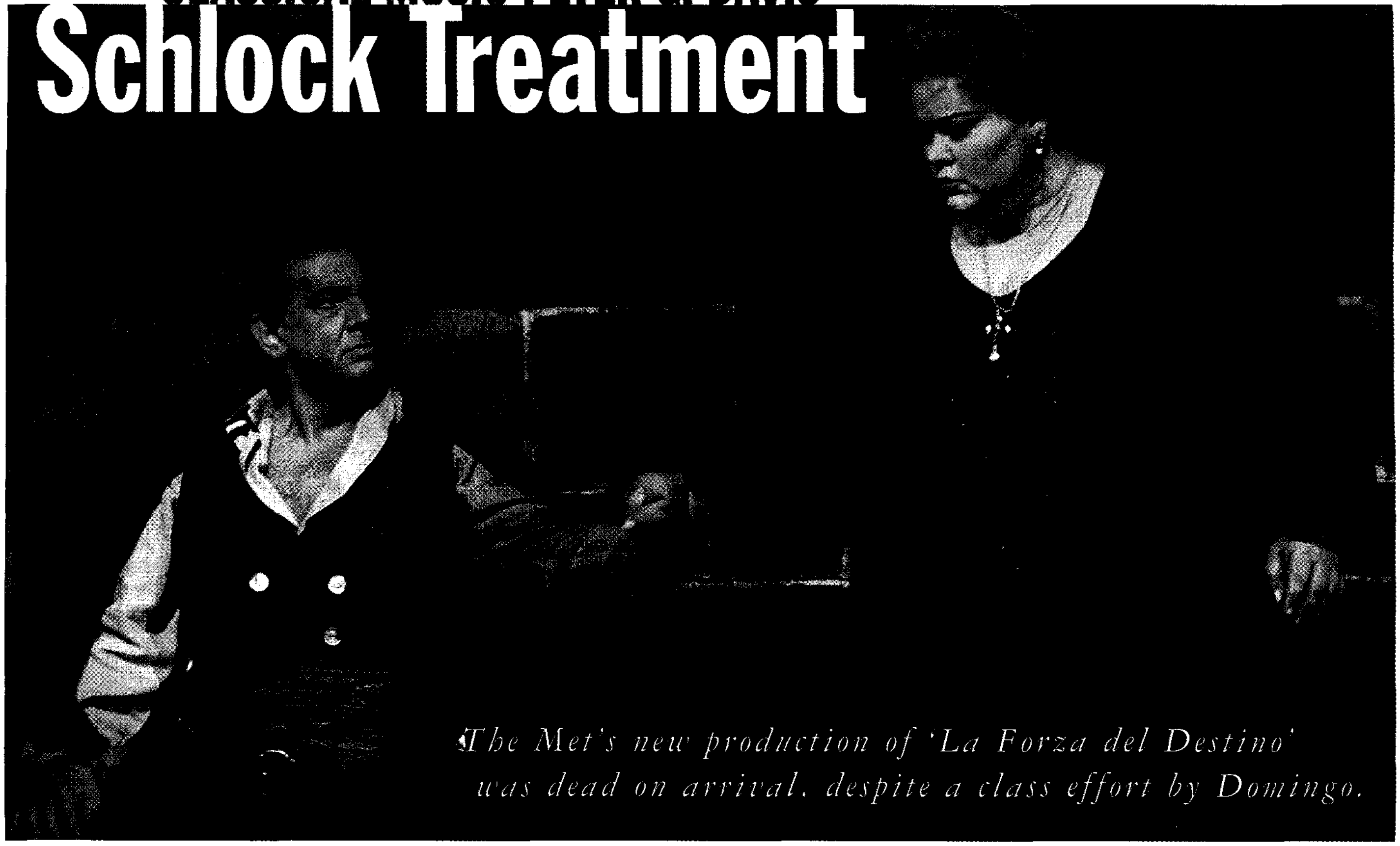


The Met's new production of 'La Forza del Destino' was dead on arrival, despite a class effort by Domingo.

An opera scorned: Plácido Domingo and Sharon Sweet in *La Forza del Destino.*

IT WAS HEARTENING TO HEAR THE PRODUCTION TEAM SO loudly booed and hissed after the first performance of the Metropolitan Opera's new **La Forza del Destino**—a spontaneous emotional outburst that rarely occurs at the Met these days. Sometimes it seems as if Met audiences no longer have the will, energy, or confidence to register strong reactions of any kind, pro or con, but such a dead-on-arrival presentation of Verdi's ambitious operatic epic deserved every catcall. This is the fifth and, one hopes, final perfunctory Met effort from director Giancarlo del Monaco and designer Michael Scott, a partnership that started out promisingly four years ago with an effectively theatrical and atmospheric *La Fanciulla del West,* Puccini's Wild West opera. It's been downhill from there—last season's lazily thought-through *Simon Boccanegra* also did Verdi no favors—and their refusal to take *Forza* seriously indicates a production aesthetic now hobbled by creative exhaustion or, worse, sheer cynicism.

This sprawling opera is tricky to focus and control, but its many colorful genre scenes should at least be vividly imagined by a director, even if he hasn't a clue how to shape their complex, often contradictory character into a coherent dramatic sequence. Del Monaco dutifully takes us from the palaces and monasteries of Spain to the battlefields of Italy and back, but the trip is a long, sleepy, uneventful one. Along the way, he obligingly fills the stage with gypsies, muleteers, soldiers, monks, vivandières, traveling peddlers, pilgrims, and peasants, but the incessant flag-waving, aimless milling, and operetta posturing only make the tableaux look flatter and sillier than a feeble high-school pageant. No wonder the main characters of the drama seem so stiff and insignificant as they wander listlessly through Scott's indistinctive, drawn-from-stock sets. Since Del Monaco never bothers to define their personalities or energize their confrontations, whatever compelling points Verdi wanted to make about three tragically wasted young lives are pretty much left to the imagination.

As the haunted Incan prince Don Alvaro, Plácido Domingo supplies the evening's only bit of class, singing with undiminished vigor and tonal vibrancy. He even manages to generate a touch of tragic dignity once he doffs that first embarrassing last-of-the-Incas costume, complete with headband and diamond earring. His nemesis, Vladimir Chernov as Don Carlo, makes pleasant sounds with a suave baritone, but it seems clear by now that this vocal and stage presence is really too small to be effective in big Italian parts, at least at the Met. It's said that viable dramatic Verdi sopranos no longer exist, but there must be something better out there than Sharon Sweet, whose Leonora is unacceptable even as a stopgap. Her ample soprano fills the house, but this slippery sound lacks a firm center, and she stitches notes together meaninglessly, as if she finds musical notation some sort of strange, incomprehensible foreign language. Roberto Scandiuzzi (Padre Guardiano), Gloria Scalchi (Preziosilla), and Bruno Pola (Fra Melitone) add authentic *italianità* to the sorry business but not much vocal distinction. As so often happens when nearly everything is wrong onstage, James Levine seems to lose interest as well, and his musical direction is extremely lackluster.

WHO COULD RESIST A MUSICAL EXTRAVAGANZA SEDUCTIVELY titled **Orientalism,** especially one that features the local debut of a young conductor who has already begun to capture a lot of press attention? Yes, the Brooklyn Philharmonic's latest topical weekend at the Academy of Music promised not only to reveal the musical secrets of the Orient but also to introduce us to the orchestra's breathlessly promoted new music director designate, 34-year-old Robert Spano ("Not since James Levine, Michael Tilson Thomas, or

Photograph by Beatriz Schiller.

Leonard Slatkin has an American conductor appeared who . . ." etc., etc.). Even the city's twelfth snowstorm of the winter failed to discourage a curious audience, which was probably further tantalized by the sight of a full Balinese gamelan arrayed onstage, with musicians in native dress playing a suite of traditional Javanese court music.

Like most such ambitious theme shows, the BPO's "Orientalism" piqued one's interest but never fully satisfied it. After all, the impact of Eastern styles and musical materials on Western composition is a vast subject with a long history, traceable to the very beginnings of medieval notation and barely to be hinted at in one weekend. Aside from the main event, which did have some substantial points to make, there were a few token bows, and mostly in obvious directions. During a pre-concert talk, we heard a dash of Mozart's "Turkish" music and snippets of piano music by the long-forgotten granddaddy of French Orientalism, Félicien David (1810–1876). Introductory essays in the program book dwelled on helpful if inevitably predictable generalities. The informal four-hour Sunday-afternoon "interplay" of more talk and chamber music added a couple of contemporary pieces by Steve Reich and Michael Tenzer to the mix. Perhaps the most instructive moments for East-meets-West neophytes came during the orchestral concert, when the focus was narrowed down to Balinese music in its pure form and how the sounds and disciplines of this special musical culture influenced musicians as diverse as Maurice Ravel and the Canadian-American composer and ethnomusicologist Colin McPhee (1900–1964).

Here was a subject that could be followed over a period of nearly 70 years and neatly compressed into an hour. The suite played by the Indonesian Consulate Gamelan was probably similar to what was heard at the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1889, a first exposure to authentic Javanese music for most Europeans, including Debussy and Ravel. Both composers were much impressed by the music's unconventional tonal resources, colors, and rhythmic movement, and for Ravel, only 14 at the time, the experience inaugurated a lifetime fascination with the Orient. He never traveled there, but a distinctly Asian quality haunts many of his scores, and the Balinese connection is especially pronounced in the *Empress of the Pagodas* excerpt from his *Mother Goose* ballet. It registers only as an exotic memory, though, since the pentatonic scale and bell-like percussion effects still function as basically decorative devices instead of attempting to duplicate the sophisticated metrics and melodic structures of Balinese music.

McPhee, on the other hand, lived in Bali between 1931 and 1939 and immersed himself in the local culture. His best-known work, *Tabuh-Tabuhan* of 1936, shows how the sonorities and formal procedures of the gamelan—"a delicious confusion," as he once tried to describe them, "a strangely sensuous and quite unfathomable art, mysteriously aerial, aeolian, filled with joy and radiance"—have become organic features of his musical thought. The process is even more subtly achieved in the piece the Brooklyn Philharmonic performed: his Symphony No. 2 (1957), a cyclical score through which Balinese materials are woven as interior allusive images rather than mere exotic ornamentation. The symphony as a whole has a strangely enigmatic quality, an undercurrent of wistfulness and gentle regret, that invites repeated listening. Luckily, the BPO has just released a recording of the piece, on MusicMasters 67159-2, conducted by the orchestra's former music director, Dennis Russell Davies.

The second half of the program was devoted to Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sheherazade,* perhaps not the most enterprising or appropriate choice in this context but certainly a clever one. A surefire crowd pleaser, this pop-concert warhorse is the classic exemplar of Arabian-nights Orientalism as well as a gratifying party piece for both conductor and orchestra, although one now heard more often on discs than in live performance. Whether *Sheherazade* turned out to be the best introduction to Spano is another question. The performance proved beyond a doubt that he can get an orchestra's full cooperation, have it play in tune, balance the ensemble, and clarify Rimsky's sometimes garrulous rhetoric. What I missed in his interpretation was any sense of storytelling fantasy, theatrical flair, or ability to take pleasure in a piece that exudes such sensuality. Before he tackles this sort of showy repertory again, Spano might listen closely to the recordings of Stokowski and Koussevitzky, if he thinks those conductors can teach him anything.

THE BROOKLYN PHILHARMONIC'S "ORIENTAL" WEEKEND OVERlapped with yet another thematic event, the final concerts in the 92nd Street Y's penultimate **Schubertiade,** a decade-long series that concludes with the composer's bicentenary next year. The project has changed direction several times, beginning as a strictly chronological progression through Schubert's 1,000 or so scores before evolving into the present, apparently more box-office-friendly thematic approach. Hermann Prey, the lone survivor among the 1988 founders, soldiers on as artistic consultant and principal star attraction, although the reordering of priorities must disappoint him.

This year's theme was "Opposites Attract: Schubert and Beethoven"—not exactly a topic to set the pulses racing, but one that could probably be chewed over indefinitely. More provocative subjects were treated in other years: the drastic changes in the perception of Schubert and his music over the past two centuries; the composer's sexual orientation and whether being gay in early-nineteenth-century Vienna materially affected his work; and, on a purely elevated musical level, a thorough investigation of the piano sonatas, which András Schiff played so memorably in 1993. I unfortunately missed this year's symposium, which explored aspects in the personal and musical relationships between Beethoven and Schubert. But the handsome 82-page program booklet, written and edited by SUNY-Buffalo musicologist Christopher H. Gibbs, raised interesting points about the two composers, particularly how Schubert veered from Beethoven's vehement musical determinism to cultivate his own layered poetic fantasies.

"...The twelfth snowstorm of the winter **failed to discourage** *a curious audience at BAM's ambitious 'Orientalism' program..."*

The Balinese gamelan at BAM's Orientalism extravaganza.

The two concerts I could attend were both dominated by Prey's vocal presence: an informal salon evening no doubt similar to those Schubert and his friends often put together, and a vocal recital alternating the songs of both composers. Frankly, the "opposites attract" theme was not brightly illuminated, considering that Beethoven wrote few songs compared with Schubert, one of the greatest lieder composers. Both did know how to relax and entertain their listeners, though—even the stern Beethoven in his delightfully unbuttoned arrangements of British folk songs for voice and trio—and Prey's salon contained many scintillating musicians to do the honors. Better still, the solo recital with David Golub at the piano found the baritone in amazingly refreshed vocal form for a singer of 66, as he engagingly compared the two composers' settings of poetry by Goethe. ▬

Photograph by Jack Vartoogian.

DANCE TOBI TOBIAS

Minor Miracles

Young students from the New Ballet School add freshness and vigor to Feld's season.

The spring of youth: Feld dancers in *Paean*.

"KIDS DANCE," TWO ENGAGING PROGRAMS PERformed entirely by dancers under voting age, studs the schedule of **Feld Ballets/NY,** at the Joyce Theater through March 31. These spirited shows celebrate the fact that today roughly one third of the adult members of the company were bred in its innovative affiliate academy. The New Ballet School seeks its students in the city's public schools and completely subsidizes the training of those who have the talent, passion, and unflagging will to work required to make a professional dancer. Since its beginning in 1977, this unique institution has steadily expanded the talent pool it draws from. More than 30,000 children were auditioned in the last sweep; some 800 were accepted for introductory classes. And as it shepherds its students from the eager, gawky beginner level to preprofessional status, the school develops the youngsters' remarkable stage presence by presenting them onstage—as part of the parent company's enterprise.

Until recently, however, the use of the kids was either a novelty—with a school-recital air—in the Feld troupe's regular programming or a piquant addition to an occasional ballet, a practice of the great state-supported ballet companies in Europe and Russia that was continued by Balanchine in the States. Two years ago, Eliot Feld boldly made his student dancers the whole show, and he has increased the number of their performances from four last year to twelve in the present run. He has them dancing not only his own ballets—some originally designed for adults—but also works by notable modern-dance choreographers, several created explicitly for them. Pilobolus weighed in this time with a fresh, amusing octet for junior and senior guys. The kids' repertoire, which understandably tends to be very now and punchy, bows briefly to a more elegant tradition with a take on eighteenth-century court dance, arranged by Catherine Turocy, an expert on the Baroque forms that evolved into classical ballet.

This season, Papa Feld made his brood a substantial piece called *Meshugana Dance*. (In Yiddish, a language with which Feld grew up, *meshugana* means nuts and is often applied to the fool in question in a tolerant, even fond way.) Feld manages something incredible with this piece: He joins, seamlessly, folk dances of the Old Country—those lines, those chains, those nodding heads—to break dancing, a raucous genre spawned by the contemporary urban ghetto, then caps his tour de force by adding animal motifs from traditional African dance. The movement mix is rich and wonderful; what's more, it's a reflection of today's rising generation—multicultural and, if rightly nurtured, the better for it.

Qualms I've had in the past about the training provided by the New Ballet School—it does not seem rigorous enough to produce crackerjack classical dancers—were allayed by the all-kids programs because the students' dancing is so natural and exuberant, qualities easily stifled by uncompromising rigor. From the very start, I've applauded the New Ballet School's system of finding potential dancers in circumstances where the dancers-in-embryo might not have the opportunity to find their way to dance training. It corrects a prevailing injustice. (For the most part, serious, sustained ballet schooling is a privilege of children from at least reasonably well-off and/or culturally sophisticated families.) Equally admirable is the way in which the Feld strategy is bound to enrich an eminent ballet company with meaningful numbers of artists whose origins are black, Hispanic, and Asian. To say that these ethnic groups continue to be underrepresented in almost every major classically based troupe in the Western world is putting it mildly.

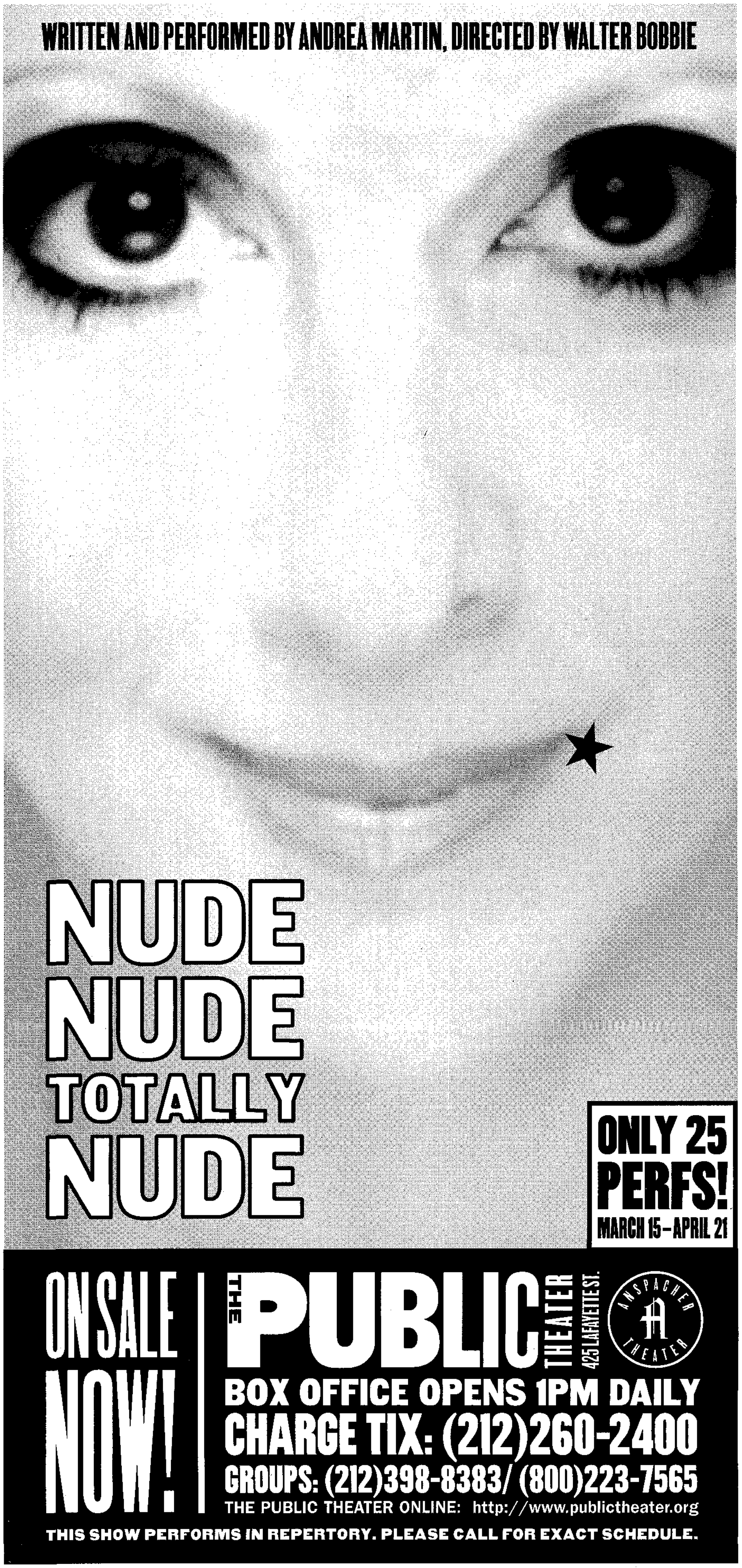
Photograph by Beatriz Schiller.

Feld augmented the regular repertory with two new ballets this season. One of them, *Paper Tiger,* is little more than a cousin of *Meshugana Dance,* Feld yielding to his vexing habit of creating several pieces from a single vein of imagination and one set of tactics. But the other, *Paean* (the program note explains it's a song of praise, joy, or triumph, just in case you didn't know), is a beauty. Set to quietly rhapsodic music by Henry Cowell, it's stark, calm, and confidently single-minded. Feld's single-mindedness can be obsessive, resulting in choreography that's mind-numbingly repetitive, a trap with no way out. Not this time.

Paean is a pattern dance for a dozen figures—six men and six women dressed in Shaker-plain matte-black practice outfits. The group continually splinters, first into crossing lines of four or six, then into male-female couples, repeatedly reassembling in a circle with the dancers facing inward, heads bent as if in meditation or prayer—or a football huddle—arms linked across one another's backs. In the first few sections, the locomotion is a long, bold pace with matching arm gestures that extend skyward, outlining a crescent moon, or scoop low across the body, as if uniting it with the earth. When the dancers pair off, the men lift the women into striking but never outlandish poses; the moves retain the dignity of work and rise to the nobility of ritual.

As the dance progresses, its momentum builds, Feld exercising sovereign control over his material. Stag leaps—imagine the massive, graceful beast clearing an obstacle—are echoed with a complementary grand action of the arms; then the whole image is frozen and suspended as the women sculpt their bodies into the soaring-animal shape and the men thrust them aloft. The stag leap, a bow to Martha Graham and, by extension, all of modern dance, is cleverly followed by a variation on the theme of *révérence,* the sequence of bows that ends formal ballet classes and, when the dancer has arrived at that stage, performances as well. With this juxtaposition, Feld, who has always married modern dance to classical ballet, suggests that different types of dance are merely subdivisions of a coherent and glorious whole, surely worthy of praise and joy.

Overall, the choreography of *Paean* suggests communal enterprise in service of an unnamed but clearly ecstatic goal—bringing a dance into being, perhaps. No one performer is ever more important than another, singled out with trickier steps done solo or isolated in the spotlight. Indeed, one of the charms of the piece, for followers of the company, is that it uses two of Feld's muses and longtime stars—Buffy Miller and Darren Gibson—alongside newcomers and even a company apprentice. Everyone is, for the moment, equal, and everyone looks like a star, lending his or her light to the constellation. ■



WRITTEN AND PERFORMED BY ANDREA MARTIN, DIRECTED BY WALTER BOBBIE

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SALES & BARGAINS

Eat, drink, man, woman: From Canard and Company's gourmet goodies to Beauty & the Feast's cocktail parties and buffets.

Stocked Market

THIS NEIGHBORHOOD EMPORIUM HAS put a number of food products on sale, including all varieties of American Spoon preserves, were $5.49 the jar, now $4.49; 1-lb. package of presliced Norwegian smoked salmon, here $14.95; regular and Swiss water-decaffeinated coffee beans, here $8 and $9 per lb., respectively, now buy 2 lbs. and get 1 lb. for $1; imported Reggiano Parmesan cheese (wedge only), was $13.25 per lb., now $9.99; Bean Cuisine soup mixes, were $4.99, now $3.49; Carr's crackers, were $1.89 each, now $1.39, or four boxes for $5. *Canard and Company, 1292 Madison Ave., at 92nd St. (722-1046); A.E., M.C., V., checks accepted; all sales final; Mon.–Fri. 7 a.m.–9 p.m., Sat and Sun. till 7:30 p.m.; 3/17–3/31.*

Write Stuff

ALL THE SMALL LEATHER GOODS AND DESK accessories here are made almost entirely by hand in England, mostly of calfskin, some of pigskin. This is the first time the New York showroom is having a sale open to the public. Ultra-slim currency case, retail $120, here $45; deluxe travel wallet, retail $295, here $110; blue writing case, retail $550, here $200; eyeglass case, retail $35, here $10; medium-size Florentine photo album, retail $195, here $75. *Smythson of Bond Street, 138 Lexington Ave., near 29th St. (684-5660); A.E., M.C., V., checks accepted; all sales final; Wed.–Sat., 3/13–3/16, 9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.*

Choosing Isaia

THIS STORE HAS MEN'S SUITS AND SPORT coats (sizes 38S–48L) by Hickey-Freeman and sport coats by Isaia, were $750–$1,200, now $295–$395; outerwear from Aquascutum, Barbour, Daks and Belfe, were $300–$795, now $150–$400; leather coats from Italy, were $800–$1,400, now $350–$650; Hickey-Freeman cashmere overcoats, were $1,600, now $750; trousers by Zanella and Barry Bricken, sizes 31–42, were $175–$375, now $75; dress and sport shirts by Borrelli, Gitman, and Troy, were $85–$240, now $40–$50. *Peter Elliot, 1070 Madison Ave., near 81st St. (570-2300); M.C., V. accepted; no alterations; all sales final; Mon.–Fri. 10:30 a.m.–7 p.m., Sat. till 6 p.m., Sun. 1–5 p.m.; through 3/17.*

Skirts: The Issue

VIA MADISON HAS WOMEN'S FASHIONS from major Italian designers (many of whom we can't mention here) in sizes 2–16. Now the always-discounted merchandise is on sale. Trousers and skirts from Zanelli, retail $220 and $198, respectively, were $150 here, now $95. All suits are now $195, such as Rina Rossi skirt suits, were $250 here, now $195; wool and wool-viscose skirt or trouser suits, were $325 here, now $195. Two-ply cashmere pullovers and cardigans, were $168 and $189 here, respectively, now $99. Nino Danieli wool coat dresses, were $198 here, now $145. *Via Madison, 244 Madison Ave., near 38th St. (599-3533); A.E., D.C., M.C., V. accepted; all sales final; Mon.–Fri. 9:30 a.m.–7:30 p.m., Sat. and Sun. 10 a.m.–6 p.m.; through 4/1.*

Wonderbra World

THIS SMALL SHOP ON THE LOWER EAST SIDE is crammed with merchandise, including lots of famous-maker women's bras and pantihose. The bras (in sizes from children's up to 44DDD) are usually 30 percent off marked retail price, now 40 percent off: the Wonderbra by Bali, retail $26, now $15.60; Vanity Fair stretch underwire, retail $25, now $15; Wacoal lace underwire, retail $52, now $31.20; Sweet Nothings by Maidenform lace bra, retail $18.50, now $11.10; Flower Bali embroidered underwire, retail $22.50, now $13.50. Pantihose, now 30 percent off: Calvin Klein, retail $7.50–$9, now $5.25–$6.30; Hanes, retail $3.50–$7.95, now $2.45–$5.57; Round the Clock, retail $4.75–$10.50, now $3.33–$7.35. *Howard Sportswear, Inc., 295 Grand St., between Eldridge and Allen Sts., New York, N.Y. 10002 (226-4307); A.E., Disc., M.C., V. accepted; Sun.–Fri. 9 a.m.–5:30 p.m. (closed Sat.); 3/15–3/31.*

Mad About View

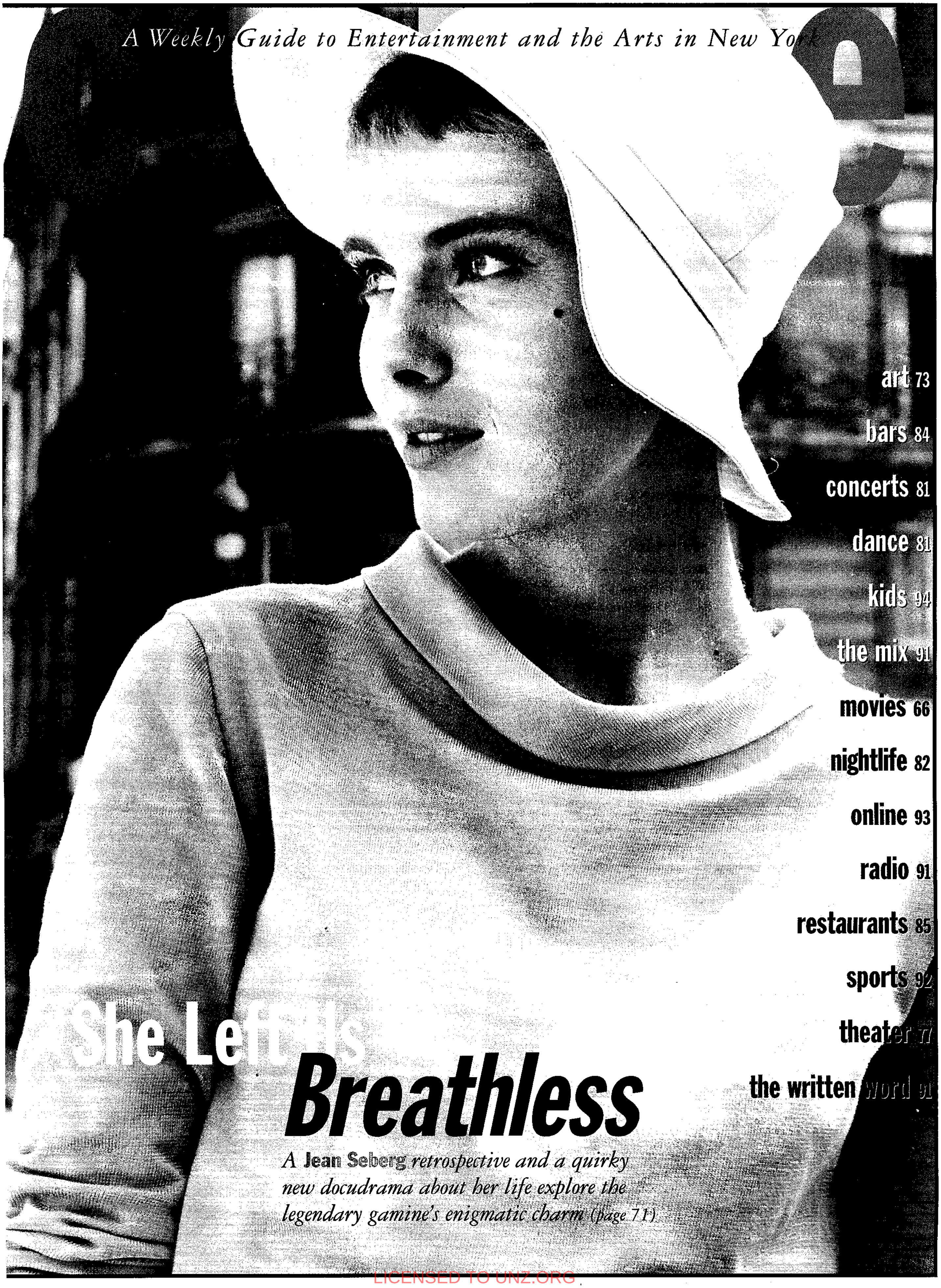
MORGENTHAL-FREDERICS'S TWO MADISON Avenue eyewear boutiques are selling selected designer frames, discontinued and current, at half-price (many come with sunglass lenses): Koh Sakai lightweight frames, were $275, now $137.50; Vogue Eyewear plastic-and-metal frames, were $160, now $80; Anglo American modified cat-eye frames, were $130, now $65; Mikli plastic square frames, were $150, now $75; Indian Eyewear lightweight metal frames, were $295, now $147.50; Cutler & Gross multicolored plastic laminate frames, were $170, now $85. *Morgenthal-Frederics Opticians, 685 Madison Ave., near 62nd St. (838-3090); Mon.–Fri. 9 a.m.–6 p.m., Thurs. till 7 p.m., Sat. till 5:30 p.m.; 944 Madison Ave., near 75th St. (744-9444); Mon.–Fri. 10 a.m.–7 p.m., Sat. till 5:30 p.m., Sun. noon–6 p.m.; A.E., M.C., V. accepted; all sales final; through 3/20.*

Cater Corner

THIS CATERER IS OFFERING 15 PERCENT OFF its usual low prices per person for up to 29 people, and 20 percent off for 30 or more (minimum of 15 guests). For example, a cocktail-party menu might include such hors d'oeuvre as crudités with dips, chicken leek tartlets, crab quesadilla, and Vietnamese summer rolls; usually $23 per person, now, for up to 29 guests, $19.55 per person; for 30 guests or more, $18.40 per person. Or a buffet-dinner party that includes such hors d'oeuvre as duck-and-scallion wonton roll-ups; entrées such as seared tuna steak with tomato concassée and frizzled leeks; and desserts such as biscotti and fresh fruit. Usually $32 per person, now $27.20 (up to 29) and $25.60 (30 and above) per person; $10 delivery charge in Manhattan, $20 in the other boroughs. Wait staff available on request, $20 an hour per waiter with a four-hour minimum. *Call Beauty & the Feast (691-6135) seven days a week anytime; checks accepted up to five business days before party; C.O.D (cash only); seven days' advance notice of cancellation is necessary; through 6/15.* ▬

DO NOT PHONE: *Send suggestions to Leonore Fleischer,* New York *Magazine, 755 Second Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017-5998, six weeks before the sale. Only sales exclusive to "Sales & Bargains" and not previously advertised or published elsewhere will be considered.*

A Weekly Guide to Entertainment and the Arts in New York



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She Left Us *Breathless*

A **Jean Seberg** *retrospective and a quirky new docudrama about her life explore the legendary gamine's enigmatic charm* (page 71)

movies

Knocks at My Door . . . The Best of Brando

Opening

Hidden Agenda

Along with colleagues Tom Hanks, Shirley MacLaine, and Tony Curtis, Susan Sarandon (pictured with Catherine Deneuve in 1983's *The Hunger*) talks about Hollywood's avoidance, treatment, and eventual acceptance of gay characters in *The Celluloid Closet* (opening March 15), an engaging documentary based on Vito Russo's acclaimed book.

Photograph by The Kobal Collection.

New Films

Anne Frank Remembered—A documentary by Jon Blair, produced with the unprecedented cooperation of the Anne Frank House, which provided previously unseen photos, letters, and access to the annex where the Franks hid. (2 hrs. 2 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Antonia's Line—A multigenerational story about four women and their various struggles with men. Written and directed by Marleen Gorris. In Dutch with English subtitles. (1 hr. 44 mins.; NR) *Angelika Film Center.*

Babe—A wonderful, well-done fable about a pig (Babe) who doesn't fit in with all the other animals on his farm. So he defies convention and dares to become a sheepdog. Directed by Chris Noonan. (1 hr. 31 mins.; G) *Manhattan Twin.*

Beautiful Girls—Matt Dillon gives a lovely performance as Tommy, a former high-school star who spends his nights plowing snow; his old girlfried (Lauren Holly) won't stop pursuing him, and he doesn't have the strength to resist her—a situation that leaves his regular girlfriend (Mira Sorvino) dieting herself into anorexia. Tim Hutton plays a cocktail-hour piano player who left town, flopped, and has now returned; Michael Rapaport is a misogynist dope who dreams of supermodels. These young men are often pathetic, and the movie (written by Scott Rosenberg and directed by Ted Demme) looks at them with affectionate rue. Rosenberg and Demme nod toward feminism and accomplished women, but they also hold to the dreary idea that men are by nature rhapsodists and fantasists, whereas women represent the solid earth of family and work. It's time, perhaps, to retire the sentimental genre of male-bonding movies.(Denby; 2/26/96) (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Chelsea; Sutton; Orpheum; 84th Street Six.*

Before and After—A suburban couple (Meryl Streep and Liam Neeson) are torn between loyalty to their teenage son and the desire to know the truth when he is accused of murdering his girlfriend. With Edward Furlong. Directed by Barbet Schroeder. (1 hr. 48 mins.; PG-13) *Village East; Murray Hill Cinemas; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Embassy 1; 86th Street East; 84th Street Six.*

★**The Birdcage**—Director Mike Nichols and writer Elaine May have set this remake of *La Cage aux Folles* in Miami's South Beach. Above the Birdcage club live Armand (Robin Williams) and Albert (Nathan Lane), who have been together through so many versions and productions that they easily qualify as the world's most famous married couple. Armand's son is about to be married to the daughter of an ultraconservative couple (the bride's father, played by Gene Hackman, is a right-wing senator), and Armand and Albert have to put on a respectable show for the parents. Williams gives one of his most restrained and beautiful performances; he's the soul of the movie, a hardworking husband in love with a funny hysteric whom he will take care of till his dying day. Armand and Albert put on a hilarious dinner party for the senator and his wife, and the loveliest thing about this scene is that caricature turns to benevolent farce. When the senator finds himself charmed by a man dressed as a woman and even becomes jealous of the woman's "husband," he is softened and transfigured by absurdity. Opposites suddenly recognize each other as soulmates, and from this recognition flows reconciliation. (Denby; 3/11/96) (1 hr. 57 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 34th Street East; Chelsea; Baronet/Coronet; Carnegie Hall Cinema; Criterion Center; Orpheum; Lincoln Square; Metro Cinema.*

Bottle Rocket—A remarkably well-written first feature by the young Owen C. Wilson and Wes Anderson about suburban would-be criminals. Directed by Anderson. Executive-produced by James L. Brooks. (2 hrs. 15 mins.; R) *34th Street Showplace; Lincoln Square.*

★**Broken Arrow**—If you've never seen a Hong Kong action film, you may as well see *Broken Arrow.* Director John Woo has moved to Hollywood, so *Broken Arrow* takes place in the Arizona desert and features stars like John Travolta and Christian Slater. There's sort of a plot (about a nihilistic Air Force pilot and a couple of stolen nukes), but none of that means much. What matters here is movement: not only is everyone and everything moving, but everything moves in relation to other things (car, trains, helicopters) that are moving. People jump, tumble, leap, fall, drop from planes, bridges, and moving trains. The movie is a pardise of kinetic bravura—sheer air ballet—and the gross realities of pain, blood and dust never intrude for a second. It's silly and empty, but it's certainly a great show. (Denby; 2/26/96) (1 hr. 50 mins.; R) *Art Greenwich Twin; Chelsea; Murray Hill Cinemas; Criterion Center; Movieplex 42; 86th Street; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Square.*

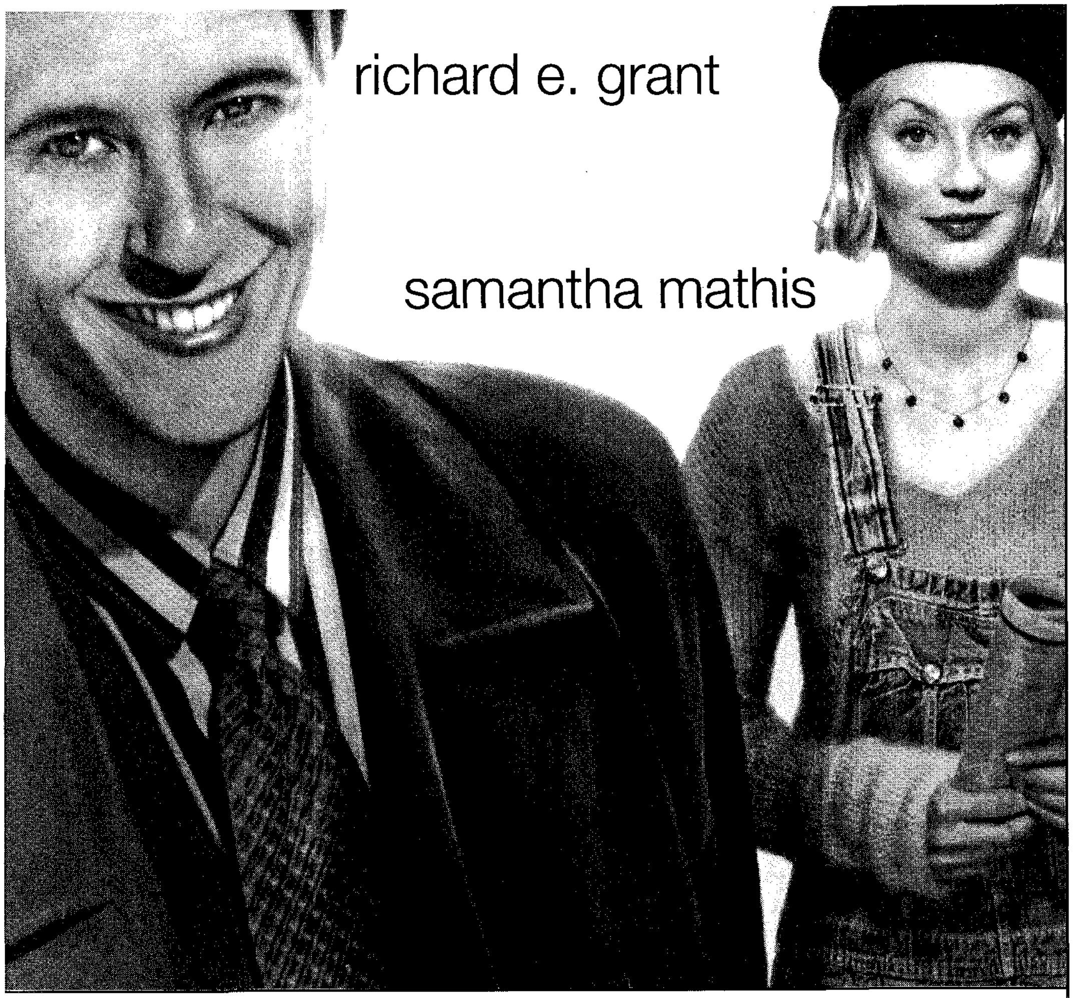
The Celluloid Closet—A documentary about Hollywood's treatment and depiction of gays and lesbians in film. (1 hr. 41 mins.; R). *Area theaters.*

Chungking Express—In these two very loosely connected love stories, lovelorn characters desire the

Ground Rules:

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by David Denby...A ★ denotes a current release that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element...Reviews are followed by the Manhattan theaters where the film is playing. For movie listings online see the last page of this section.

"Cue" cover photograph by Photofest.



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wrong partners, obsess over the ones who remain slightly out-of-reach, and eventually connect in what seem to be the slightest of encounters. Writer-director Wong Kar-Wai weds striking visuals to two stories that somehow manage to be both disheartening and romantic; he knows the difference between the way we would like life to be and the way it is, and still, without compromising his characters, ties up both tales with a thread of hope. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R). *Angelika Film Center; Carnegie Hall Cinema.*

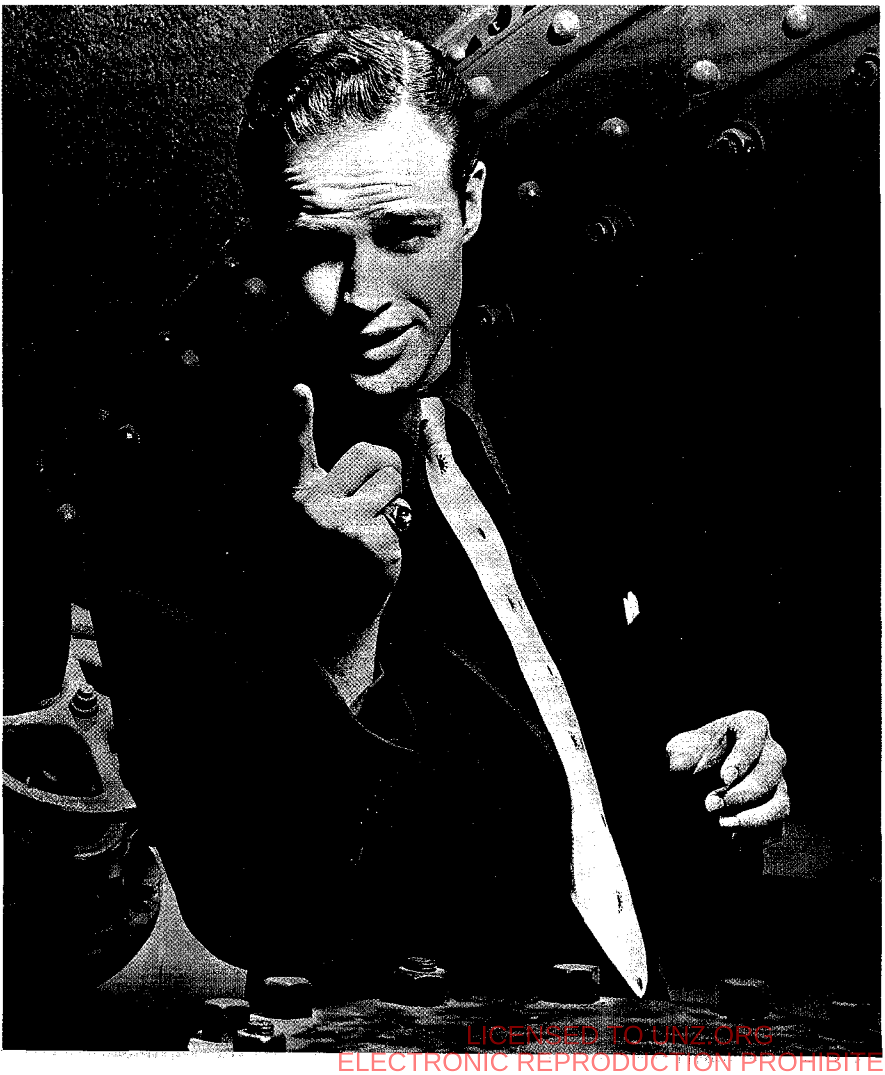
★**City Hall**—We are taken through a crisis in the popular mayorship of John Pappas (Al Pacino), a shrewd politician who is half Mario Cuomo, half Fiorello La Guardia. A small black boy is accidentally killed in a shoot-out between a cop and a minor mafioso. Pappas's deputy mayor, Kevin Calhoun (John Cusack), runs through the city bureaus and agencies trying to figure out what went wrong. That mafioso, it turns out, shouldn't have been on the street. A normally tough-minded judge (Martin Landau) had let him out on probation; the thug was a nephew of a Mafia kingpin who hangs out with city pols, and the judge in question is a longtime friend and ally of the mayor's. The emotional heart of the movie is the relationship between the mayor and his young deputy; Pappas directs Kevin, advises him, but also performs for him, for he sees his younger self in Kevin. This is a wonderful role for John Cusack; he has authority now, and his Kevin has real drive and intelligence, so his opinion is worth having. And his disillusion is worth grieving over. (Denby; 2/19/96) (1 hr. 50 mins.; R) *Village East; 19th Street East; Murray Hill Cinemas; Ziegfeld; Beekman; Orpheum; 84th Street Six.*

The City of Lost Children—A fantasy about a mad scientist named Krank who, aging prematurely because he cannot dream, kidnaps children and taps into their dreams. Directed by Jean-Pierre Jeunet and Marc Caro. In French with English subtitles. (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center.*

Dead Man Walking—A few minutes of Sean Penn's performance and you know he's got the role of Louisiana death-row inmate Matthew Poncelet down right. He defines "shifty"; he's mean, cut-off, mocking. His Poncelet tries to bully and seduce a nun, Sister Helen Préjean (Susan Sarandon) who takes an interest in his case; when she proves to be tougher than he thought, he slowly opens up to her. Based on a book by the actual Helen Préjean, this is the story of Matthew Poncelet's redemption and death. Poncelet has been convicted of murdering two teenagers, and as Sister Helen defends him, she takes abuse from the parents of the dead kids. Robbins observes the parents' rage neutrally, without turning them into vengeful hysterics. But at the end, as nun and murderer reach out to each other in the death chamber, the filmmakers blow the case they are plainly making against capital punishment. The implication is that Poncelet shouldn't be executed because he has accepted God and may become a good man—but if you're truly against capital punishment, you're against executing the redeemed and unredeemed alike. (Denby; 1/8/96) (2 hrs. 5 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 34th Street Showplace; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Square.*

Retrospective
The Lean Years

The only time Marlon Brando sang for the cameras—not counting his weirdly entertaining appearance on *Larry King Live* last year—was in 1955's *Guys and Dolls.* That film, along with some of Brando's lesser-known works, will be shown at the American Museum of the Moving Image beginning March 16. (See "Museums, Societies, Etc.," for info.)



Photograph by Photofest.

Down Periscope—A comedy about a hapless Naval crew aboard a dilapidated submarine. With Kelsey Grammer. Directed by David Ward. (1 hr. 40 mins.; PG-13) *Village East; 23rd Street West Triplex; Crown Gotham; National Twin; Orpheum; Regency; Plaza.*

Ed—Jack Cooper (Matt LeBlanc) is a down-on-his luck minor-league pitcher whose fortunes change when he hits it off with the new third-baseman—a chimpanzee. (1 hr. 34 mins.; PG) *Area theaters.*

Executive Decision—Six military operatives board a hijacked plane in midair and attempt to defuse a bomb loaded with nerve gas. With Kurt Russell and Steven Segagal. Directed by Stuart Baird. (R) *Area theaters.*

Fargo—See David Denby, p. 50. (1 hr. 38 mins.; R) *Art Greenwich Twin; 19th Street East; New York Twin; Lincoln Square.*

Flower of My Secret—In Pedro Almodovar's latest comedy, Marisa Paredes plays a romance novelist who finds it impossible to write when her marriage falls apart. In Spanish with English subtitles. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) *Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

French Twist—A suburban housewife, turned off by her husband's relentless philandering, is suddenly turned on by a woman. The plot exhausts nearly all options for a possible ending. Written and directed by the star, Josiane Balasko. (2 hrs. ; R) *Quad Cinema.*

From the Journals of Jean Seberg—In this fictionalized autobiography, Mary Beth Hurt portrays the late actress as she reviews her life and her work. Directed by Mark Rappaport. (1 hr. 37 mins.; NR) *Cinema Village 12th St.; Angelika 57.*

Happy Gilmore—A comedy starring Adam Sandler as a displaced hockey player-turned-golf-pro. Directed by Dennis Dugan. (1 hr. 32 mins.; PG-13) *Manhattan Twin; 86th Street; Plaza.*

★**Heat**—There are not one but two obsessional figures—Neil McCauley (Robert De Niro), the head of a frighteningly determined group of thieves, and Vincent Hanna (Al Pacino), a haggard but still potent and resourceful LAPD detective. The mental duel between the hunter and quarry, redoubled by the implicit rivalry between Pacino and De Niro, holds the film together. (Denby; 12/18/95) (2 hrs. 41 mins.; R) *Criterion Center.*

Heavy Metal—The re-release of Ivan Reitman's animated cult film, which weds six science fiction stories to an arena-rock soundtrack. With the voices of Eugene Levy, Harold Ramis, and the late John Candy. (NR) *Waverly; Criterion Center; 84th Street Six.*

Hellraiser 4: Bloodline—The latest in horror from Clive Barker. Directed by Alan Smithee. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Waverly; 19th Street East; 59th Street East; Astor Plaza; Movieplex 42; Orpheum; 84th Street Six; New Coliseum; Nova.*

Homeward Bound II—Two dogs and a cat get separated from their owners at an airport and find themselves lost in San Francisco. Directed by David R. Ellis. (1 hr. 29 mins.; G) *Village East; 23rd Street West Triplex; Embassy 2–4; Sutton; 86th Street East; Lincoln Square; New Coliseum; Olympia Cinemas; Plaza.*

If Lucy Fell—Sitcom-ish romantic comedy about two longtime friends who make a pact to jump off the Brooklyn Bridge if neither of them finds true love within 30 days. Written and directed by Eric Schaeffer, who stars with Sarah Jessica Parker, Elle Macpherson, and Ben Stiller. (1 hr. 33 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea; Gemini Twin; Lincoln Square.*

Institute Benjamenta—Directed by the cultishly revered Brothers Quay, *Institute Benjamenta* is quite beautiful but is practically devoid of narrative. If your inclinations run toward the existential and abstract, go; otherwise, avoid. (1 hr. 45 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

Knocks at My Door—Two nuns in a small Latin American town endanger themselves when they harbor a political dissident. Directed by Alejandro Saderman. (1 hr. 45 mins.; NR). *Angelika 57.*

L'America—Gianni Amelio's tale of two Italian entrepreneurs who attempt to take advantage of the political and economic upheaval in post-Communist Albania. Winner of Italy's Nastri D'Argento for Best Picture and Best Director. (1 hr. 56 mins.; NR) *Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

La Haine—A multicultural trio of alienated young men—a Jew, an Arab, and a black—spend a very long day lounging around, brawling, pulling off minor drug deals, and attempting to see a friend brutalized by police after a riot. Director Mathieu Kassovitz is very talented: He shoots in black-and-white, often with a handheld camera, and the movie captures the moody recklessness, the volatile, offhand brutality and loyalty of the 'hood, French-style. Kassovitz, however, takes cool to the point of meaninglessness; the movie is powerful but irritatingly vague. (Denby; 2/12/96) (1 hr. 34 mins.; NR) *Village Theatre VII.*

Land and Freedom—In thirties Barcelona, a young man (Ian Hart) finds himself torn between the Communist Party and the woman he loves. Directed by Ken Loach. (1 hr. 45 mins.; NR) *Area theaters.*

Last Summer in the Hamptons—Three generations of an acting dynasty convene at their annual summer retreat for the last time. Directed by Henry Jaglom. (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *Angelika 57.*

★**Leaving Las Vegas**—Ben Sanderson (Nicolas Cage) is drinking himself to death—purposefully, and without regret. Having dispensed with the usual suspense of such movies (when will the hero hit bottom and pull himself out of it?), director Mike Figgis is free to open his film to mystery and art. After making a bonfire of his belongings, Ben heads for Las Vegas, where he meets the one girl for him, a good-looking hooker named Sera (Elisabeth Shue). We don't need explanations as to why she falls in love with Ben; we can see that she's touched by him. Ben and Sera have gone deep into self-hurting pleasures, and they're not coming back. Figgis accepts them with something like awe: The doomed nature of their love transfigures it. (Denby; 11/13/95) (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) *Village East; Chelsea; Criterion Center; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Square; Olympia Cinemas.*

Man of the Year—A "mock" documentary by former *Playgirl* Man of the Year Dirk Shafer about his reign in the closet. A somewhat amateurish film that never manages to convince the audience that Shafer's sexuality was even a matter of contention. (1 hr. 25 mins.; NR). *Village East.*

Mary Reilly—The Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde story with a twist; it's told through the eyes of Dr. Jekyll's timid chambermaid, Mary Reilly (Julia Roberts). Directed by Stephen Frears. (1 hr. 58 mins.; R) *Criterion Center; Gemini Twin.*

A Midwinter's Tale—A comedy about a struggling actor who attempts to mount a serious production of *Hamlet.* Written and directed by Kenneth Branagh. (1 hr. 39 mins.; R) *Cinema I, II, Third Ave.*

Mr. Holland's Opus—Richard Dreyfuss stars as a musician who somewhat unwillingly becomes a teacher—and therein finds his greatest satisfaction. Directed by Stephen Herek. (2 hrs. 25 mins.; PG) *Murray Hill Cinemas; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Lincoln Square.*

Muppet Treasure Island—A live-action send-up of the Robert Louis Stevenson book. With Kermit the Frog, Miss Piggy, Gonzo, and Fozzy Bear. Directed by Brian Henson. (1 hr. 39 mins.; G) *Village East; Murray Hill Cinemas; 86th Street East; Lincoln Square; Olympia Cinemas.*

The Neon Bible—The coming-of-age of a young boy in the South of the 1940s, told in flashback: life with his cruel father (Denis Leary), his sensitive mother (Diana Scarwid), and his eccentric chanteuse of an aunt (Gena Rowlands). Directed by Terence Davies, who adapted the screenplay from the novel by John Kennedy Toole. (1 hr. 32 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

Nico-Icon—A top model of the sixties, Warhol superstar Nico went on to flirt with a film career, have affairs with quite a few artists, seriously pursue music, and get her son hooked on heroin. Suzanne Ofteringer's documentary is neither sneering nor too reverential; but for all Ofteringer's digging, we learn only that Nico was most brilliant at being enigmatic. (1 hr. 15 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

Nueba Yol—The tragi-comic story of an aspiring immigrant from the Dominican Republic who will do anything to remain in New York. Directed by Angel Muniz. (1 hr. 44 mins.; NR) *Embassy 2–4; New Coliseum; Nova.*

The Postman—As the film opens, the late Massimo Troisi's Mario Ruoppolo has no one to speak to. And then the island where Mario lives is visited by a kind of god—the exiled Chilean poet Pablo Neruda. Mario, who becomes his postman, suddenly cannot stop speaking, and the poet, at first brusque, gradually gets drawn into the miracle of Mario's awakening. Directed by Michael Radford. In Italian. (Denby; 6/14/95) (1 hr. 49 mins.; PG) *Village East; Chelsea; Eastside Playhouse; UA East.*

Restoration—Robert Downey Jr. stars as a wayward doctor who much prefers the orgiastic life-style afforded him as King Charles II's private physician to actually tending the violently sick masses stricken by the Black Plague. Overblown and way too long. (1 hr. 53 mins.; R) *Worldwide Cinemas; 62nd and Broadway.*

Rumble in the Bronx—A crossover vehicle for Hong Kong action star Jackie Chan that fails to do him justice. Chan is a martial-arts master who deftly blends breathtaking action, screwball setups, and physical comedy into the smoothest of mixtures, but here, nothing seems to work. Much of the problem lies in the setting and what passes for a storyline: Keung (Chan) comes to the Bronx and has to fight a lot of New York punks, who themselves look and act like a tourist's idea of New York—style thugs. Chan doesn't get to display his martial-arts chops to the best effect, because here he's fighting guys who can only throw crude punches. It's a garish cartoon; though we never feel like Chan's above it, he deserves better. (1 hr. 27 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 19th Street East; 34th Street Showplace; Criterion Center; Movieplex 42; New York Twin; Orpheum; 84th Street Six; New Coliseum; Nova; Plaza Twin.*

★**Sense and Sensibility**—In the England of the 1800s, women without a dowry enjoy very few options. Two wealthy young men make advances to the Dashwood sisters (Thompson plays the elder, Elinor, and Kate Winslet is Marianne), and then turn away, causing the women extreme anguish. Taiwanese director Ang Lee stages the walks, dinners, teas, and balls without pomp; the emotional and erotic goings-on become intimately connected to the flowing lawns and great rooms. Thompson (who adapted the screenplay from Jane Austen's novel) and Lee get the relationship between the two sisters right, the play of strength and weakness, candor and concealment—sense and sensibility merging in each sister, until both Marianne and Elinor become complete human beings. (Denby; 12/18/95) (2 hrs. 15 mins.; PG) *Village Theatre VII; 19th Street East; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Square; Plaza Twin.*

Shanghai Triad—Director Zhang Yimou sets this gangster tale in thirties Shanghai, and we experience everything through the eyes of a 14-year-old country boy named Shuisheng, who must faithfully and attentively serve a gang-lord's spoiled-moll. Their relationship becomes the crux of the film, and Yimou craftily avoids clichés in rendering a double coming-of-age tale. (1 hr. 50 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

The Starmaker—A would-be talent scout scours remote Sicialian villages with a camera and the promise that those he films will become famous. Directed by Giuseppe Tornatore (*Cinema Paradiso*). (1 hr. 53 mins.; R) *Paris Theater.*

Target—Based on the last screenplay written by Satyajit Ray and directed by his son Sandip. The story centers around Singh, a wealthy landlord who hires a professional hunter to hunt for him on his next safari. The professional—an untouchable—confronts the injustices of the caste system. In Hindi with English subtitles. (2 hrs. 2 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

Up Close & Personal—Michelle Pfieffer plays a tense, ambitious Reno weathergirl who fakes a demo tape and gets an interview at a bustling Miami TV station, where she falls under the tutelage of Robert Redford's newsroom pro, a man of great integrity who is mysteriously on his way down. On camera, Michelle makes terrible blunders, but at a certain moment in any story she pulls herself together and delivers something—an emotional experience of the news—to the viewer. Redford bullies his protegee, but he always helps her; despite many mis-

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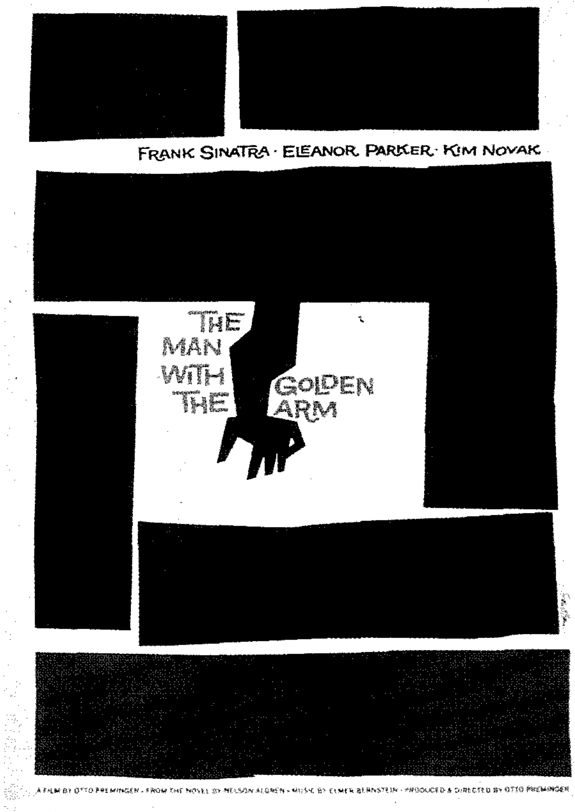
steps, she flourishes as he sinks. *Up Close & Personal* is big, dull, and familiar; the story is another go-round for *A Star is Born,* one of whose earlier versions was written by the same screenwriting team (Joan Didion and John Gregory Dunne). Directed by Jon Avnet. (Denby; 3/4/96) (2 hrs. 4 mins.; PG-13). *Chelsea; Cinema I, II, III Ave.; Guild 50th St.; Lincoln Square; Orpheum; Village East.*

. . . When We Were Colored—Based on the book by Clifton Taulbert, which chronicled his coming-of-age in forties Mississippi. Starring Richard Roundtree. Directed by Tim Reid. (1 hr. 51 mins.; PG) *First & 62nd St. Cinema.*

The White Balloon—Seven-year-old Razieh has a singular goal: to buy a goldfish. She has only a few hours before the city shuts down for New Year's Day, she has lost the money her mother has given her, and none of the street vendors seem to grasp the enormity of her problem. Winner of the Camera d'Or at the Cannes Film festival. Directed by Jafar Panahi. (1 hr. 25 mins.; R) *Quad Cinema; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

★**The Young Poisoner's Handbook**—Writer-director Ben Ross linked up with another writer, Jeff Rawle, who shared his interest in an actual murderer—Graham Young, the chem-lab wizard who killed a number of people and became a Brit tabloid celebrity of the sixties and seventies. Graham is 14 when we first see him, a nerdish boy from the London suburbs with pale skin and wide-open eyes. Hugh O'Conor, who was the young Christy Brown in *My Left Foot,* plays Graham with the polite manners of a dry-goods clerk. Methodically, Graham begins to eliminate the members of his ghastly family, a group of nasty vulgarians completely unconcious of themselves or of the blankly vicious boy who lives among them. When he gets caught, and sent to the state funny farm, the comedy deepens, and at the end, Graham thaws a little and tries to experience the pain he has caused others. But despite the shift in meaning, *The Young Poisoner's Handbook* maintains its unearthly poise. This is a remarkable first feature; if the experience doesn't hurt too much, you may find yourself laughing all the way through it. (Denby; 3/4/96) (1 hr. 39 mins.; NR) *Angelika Film Center; Cinema 3.*


FRANK SINATRA · ELEANOR PARKER · KIM NOVAK
THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN ARM
A FILM BY OTTO PREMINGER · FROM THE NOVEL BY NELSON ALGREN · MUSIC BY ELMER BERNSTEIN · PRODUCED & DIRECTED BY OTTO PREMINGER

Happening Credit Due

His title sequences for 'Psycho,' 'The Man With the Golden Arm,' and 'Casino' have made Saul Bass a legend. The School of Visual Arts honors the 75-year-old artist with a monthlong exhibit, starting March 11. (See "Museums, Societies, Etc." for info.)

Photograph courtesy of School of Visual Arts.

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

Angelika Film Center—18 W. Houston St. (995-2000) *Antonia's Line; Beautiful Girls; Chungking Express; Shanghai Triad; The City of Lost Children; The Young Poisoner's Handbook; Things to Do in Denver.*

Art Greenwich Twin—Greenwich Ave. at 12th St. (505-CINE#616) *Fargo; Broken Arrow.*

Cinema Village 12th St.—22 E. 12th St. (924-3363) *From the Journals of Jean Seberg.*

Film Forum—209 W. Houston St. (727-8110) *Nico-Icon; Target; Taxi Driver.* Opening 3/13: *Institute Benjamenta.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Quad Cinema—34 W.13th St. (255-8800) *Anne Frank Remembered; French Twist; The Neon Bible; The White Balloon.*

Village East—189 Second Ave., at 12th St. (529-6799) *Up Close and Personal; Before and After; City Hall; Down Periscope; Homeward Bound II; Leaving Las Vegas; Muppet Treasure Island; The Postman.*

Village Theatre VII—66 Third Ave., at 11th St. (982-0400) *Dead Man Walking; If Lucy Fell; La Haine; Rumble in the Bronx; Sense and Sensibility; The Birdcage.*

Waverly—323 Sixth Ave., at W. 3rd St. (505-CINE#603) *Heavy Metal; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline.*

14th-41st Streets

19th Street East—890 Broadway, at 19th St. (260-8000) *City Hall; Fargo; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Rumble in the Bronx; Sense and Sensibility.*

23rd Street West Triplex—333 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#614) *Down Periscope; Homeward Bound II; Twelve Monkeys.*

34th Street East—241 E. 34th St. (505-CINE#586) *The Birdcage.*

34th Street Showplace—238 E. 34th St. (532-5544) *Bottle Rocket; Dead Man Walking; Rumble in the Bronx.*

Chelsea—260 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#597) *Up Close and Personal; Beautiful Girls; Broken Arrow; If Lucy Fell; Leaving Las Vegas; The Postman; The Birdcage.*

Murray Hill Cinemas—160 E. 34th St. (689-6548) *Before and After; Broken Arrow; City Hall; Mr. Holland's Opus; Muppet Treasure Island.*

42nd-60th Streets

59th Street East—239 E. 59th St. (505-CINE#615) *Hellraiser 4: Bloodline.*

Angelika 57—225 W. 57th St. (586-1900) *From the Journals of Jean Seberg; Last Summer in the Hamptons.*

Astor Plaza—44th St. bet. Broadway. and Eighth Ave. (869-8340) *Hellraiser 4: Bloodline.*

Baronet/Coronet—993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (505-CINE#608) *The Birdcage.*

Carnegie Hall Cinema—887 Seventh Ave., bet. 56th and 57th Sts. (505-CINE#593) *The Birdcage; Chungking Express.*

Cinema 3—2 W. 59th St. (505-CINE#596) *The Young Poisoner's Handbook.*

Cinema I, II, Third Ave.—1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (753-6022) *Up Close and Personal; A Midwinter's Tale; Before and After; Mr. Holland's Opus.*

Criterion Center—1514 Broadway, bet. 44th and 45th Sts. (354-0900) *Broken Arrow; Heat; Heavy Metal; Leaving Las Vegas; Mary Reilly; Rumble in the Bronx; The Birdcage; Unforgettable.*

Crown Gotham—969 Third Ave., bet. 57th and 58th Sts. (759-2262) *Down Periscope.*

Eastside Playhouse—919 Third Ave., bet. 55th and 56th Sts. (755-3020) *The Postman.*

Embassy 1—1560 Broadway, bet. 46th and 47th Sts. (302-0494) *Before and After.*

Embassy 2-4—701 Seventh Ave., bet. 47th and 48th Sts. (730-7262) *Homeward Bound II; Nixon; Nueba Yol.*

Guild 50th Street—33 W. 50th St. (757-2406) *Up Close and Personal.*

Manhattan Twin—220 E. 59th St. (505-CINE#590) *Happy Gilmore; Babe.*

Movieplex 42—244 W. 42nd St. (997-7522) *Broken Arrow; From Dusk Till Dawn; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Rumble in the Bronx; The Juror; Unforgettable.*

National Twin—1500 Broadway, bet. 43rd and 44th Sts. (505-CINE#589) *Casino; Down Periscope.*

Paris Theater—4 W. 58th St. (980-5656) *The Starmaker.*

Sutton—205 E. 57th St. (759-1411) *Beautiful Girls; Homeward Bound II.*

Worldwide Cinemas—340 W. 50th St. (505-CINE#610) *Apollo 13; Get Shorty; GoldenEye; Persuasion; Restoration; Sabrina; Seven.*

Ziegfeld—141 W. 54th St. (505-CINE#602) *City Hall.*

61st Street and Above, East Side

68th Street Playhouse—1164 Third Ave., at 68th St. (734-0302) *Mighty Aphrodite.*

86th Street—125 E. 86th St. (505-CINE#604) *Broken Arrow; Happy Gilmore.*

86th Street East—210 E. 86th St. (249-1144) *Before and After; Homeward Bound II; Muppet Treasure Island.*

Beekman—1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (505-CINE#606) *City Hall.*

First & 62nd St. Cinema—400 E. 62nd St. (505-CINE#957) *. . . When We Were Colored; Broken Arrow; Dead Man Walking; Leaving Las Vegas; Sense and Sensibility.*

Gemini Twin—1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (832-1670) *Mary Reilly; If Lucy Fell.*

New York Twin—1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (744-7339) *Fargo; Rumble in the Bronx.*

Orpheum—1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (876-2400) *Up Close and Personal; Beautiful Girls; City Hall; Down Periscope; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Rumble in the Bronx; The Birdcage.*

Tower East—1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (879-1313) *Braveheart.*

UA East—1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (249-5100) *The Postman.*

61st Street and Above, West Side

62nd and Broadway—1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (505-CINE#864) *Restoration.*

84th Street Six—2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (877-3600) *Beautiful Girls; Before and After; City Hall; Heavy Metal; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Rumble in the Bronx.*

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas—30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (757-2280) *Anne Frank Remembered; Flower of My Secret; L'America; Mighty Aphrodite; Shanghai Triad; The White Balloon.*

Lincoln Square—1992 Broadway, at 68th St. (336-5000) *Up Close and Personal; Across the Sea of Time; Bottle Rocket; Broken Arrow; Dead Man Walking; Fargo; Homeward Bound II; If Lucy Fell; Into the Deep; Leaving Las Vegas; Mr. Holland's Opus; Muppet Treasure Island; Sense and Sensibility; The Birdcage; Wings of Courage.*

Metro Cinema—2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th

Sts. (505-CINE#609) *The Birdcage.*

New Coliseum—701 W. 181st St. (740-1545) *Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Homeward Bound II; Nueba Yol; Rumble in the Bronx.*

Nova—3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (862-5728) *Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Nueba Yol; Rumble in the Bronx.*

Olympia Cinemas—2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (505-CINE#613) *Homeward Bound II; Leaving Las Vegas; Muppet Treasure Island.*

Regency—1987 Broadway, bet. 67th and 68th Sts. (505-CINE#585) *Down Periscope.*

Bronx

Area Code 718

Bay Plaza—2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (320-3020) *Up Close and Personal; . . . When We Were Colored; Before and After; Broken Arrow; City Hall; Dead Man Walking; Down Periscope; From Dusk Till Dawn; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Homeward Bound II; Muppet Treasure Island; Rumble in the Bronx; The Birdcage.*

Concourse Plaza—214 E. 161th St. (588-8800) *Up Close and Personal; Broken Arrow; City Hall; Down Periscope; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Homeward Bound II; Muppet Treasure Island; Nueba Yol; Rumble in the Bronx; The Birdcage.*

Interboro—3462 E. Tremont Ave., nr. Bruckner Blvd. (792-2100) *City Hall; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Homeward Bound II; Rumble in the Bronx.*

Riverdale—5683 Riverdale Ave., at 259th St. (884-9514) *Up Close and Personal; The Birdcage.*

Whitestone—2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (409-9037) *Up Close and Personal; Babe; Broken Arrow; City Hall; Down Periscope; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Homeward Bound II; If Lucy Fell; Muppet Treasure Island; Nueba Yol; Rumble in the Bronx; The Birdcage; The Juror.*

Brooklyn

Area Code 718

Alpine—6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (748-4200) *Up Close and Personal; Dead Man Walking; Down Periscope; Homeward Bound II; Muppet Treasure Island; The Postman; The Birdcage.*

Brooklyn Heights—70 Henry St. (596-7070) *The Birdcage.*

Canarsie—9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (251-0700) *Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Homeward Bound II; Rumble in the Bronx.*

Cobble Hill—265 Court St. (596-9113) *Up Close and Personal; Angels & Insects; Anne Frank Remembered; Before and After; City Hall; Muppet Treasure Island; Toy Story.*

Fortway—6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (238-4200) *Broken Arrow; Happy Gilmore; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; If Lucy Fell; Rumble in the Bronx.*

Kenmore—Church Ave. nr. Flatbush Ave. (284-5700) *Down Periscope; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Homeward Bound II; Rumble in the Bronx.*

Kent Triplex—Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (338-3371) *City Hall; Down Periscope; Muppet Treasure Island; The Birdcage.*

Kings Plaza—5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (253-1111) *Broken Arrow; Down Periscope; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Muppet Treasure Island; Rumble in the Bronx.*

Kingsway—Kings Hwy. at Coney Island Ave. (645-8588) *Up Close and Personal; City Hall; Happy Gilmore; Homeward Bound II; If Lucy Fell; The Birdcage.*

Marboro—6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (232-4000) *Broken Arrow; City Hall; Homeward Bound II; Muppet Treasure Island; The Postman.*

Metropolitan—392 Fulton St. (858-8580) *. . . When We Were Colored; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Homeward Bound II; Muppet Treasure Island; Rumble in the Bronx.*

Plaza Twin—314 Flatbush Ave., nr. Eighth Ave. (636-0170) *Richard III; Rumble in the Bronx; Sense and Sensibility; Toy Story.*

Ridgewood—55–27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (821-5993) *Down Periscope; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Homeward Bound II; Rumble in the Bronx; The Birdcage.*

The Movies at Sheepshead Bay—Knapp St. and Harkness Ave., off Belt Pkwy. (615-1700) *Ace Ventura: When Nature Calls; Casino; Copycat; Get Shorty; GoldenEye; Home for the Holidays; Money Train; Nick of Time; The American President; Toy Story.*

Queens

Area Code 718

Astoria—28–60 Steinway St. (726-1279) *Broken Arrow; City Hall; Down Periscope; Happy Gilmore; Muppet Treasure Island; Rumble in the Bronx; The Birdcage.*

Bay Terrace—211–01 26th Ave. and Bell Blvd., Bayside (428-4040) *Up Close and Personal; Dead Man Walking; Leaving Las Vegas; Mr. Holland's Opus; Mr. Wrong; Muppet Treasure Island; The Birdcage.*

Cinema 5—183–15 Horace Harding Expy., at 183rd St., Fresh Meadows (357-9100) *Down Periscope; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Homeward Bound II; If Lucy Fell; Rumble in the Bronx.*

Cinemart—106–03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (261-2244) *Before and After; Homeward Bound II; Muppet Treasure Island.*

Continental—70–20 Austin St., Forest Hills (544-1020) *Broken Arrow; Dead Man Walking; The Postman.*

Crossbay—94–11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (848-1738) *City Hall; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Rumble in the Bronx.*

Crossbay II—92–10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (641-5330) *Up Close and Personal; Before and After; Black Sheep; Broken Arrow; Down Periscope; Happy Gilmore; Mary Reilly; Muppet Treasure Island.*

Elmwood—57–02 Hoffman Dr., Elmhurst (429-4770) *City Hall; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Homeward Bound II; Rumble in the Bronx.*

Forest Hills—107–16 Continental Ave., at Queens Blvd. (261-7866) *The Birdcage; Leaving Las Vegas.*

Fresh Meadows—190–02 Horace Harding Blvd., at 190th St. (454-6800) *Up Close and Personal; Before and After; Broken Arrow; City Hall; Dead Man Walking; The Postman; Sense and Sensibility; The Birdcage.*

Jackson Triplex—82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (478-6777) *Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Rumble in the Bronx; The Birdcage.*

Main Street—72–66 Main St., Flushing (268-3636) *Broken Arrow; Down Periscope; Happy Gilmore; Waiting to Exhale.*

Midway—108–22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (261-8572) *Down Periscope; Happy Gilmore; If Lucy Fell; Sense and Sensibility; The Juror.*

Movieworld—242–02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (423-7200) *Up Close and Personal; Broken Arrow; City Hall; Down Periscope; Happy Gilmore; The Postman; Sense and Sensibility.*

North Shore Towers—27–10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (229-7702) *City Hall; Before and After.*

Plaza —103–14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (639-0012) *Down Periscope; Happy Gilmore; Homeward Bound II.*

Quartet—160–06 Northern Blvd., at 160th St., Flushing (359-6777) *Down Periscope; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Homeward Bound II; Rumble in the Bronx.*

Retrospective

Bonjour, Tristesse

In *Diana: The Goddess Who Hunts Alone,* Carlos Fuentes's thinly novelized account of his brief affair with Jean Seberg, he writes of Seberg's unease with herself, her all-consuming desire to slip inside the skin of the "Other," and what he believes was Seberg's fatal flaw—her inability to truly do so. Yet after the 18-year-old Iowa native made her disastrous screen debut—as an impish Joan of Arc—she began to fail upward. Seberg's appeal lay not in her acting ability (or lack thereof) but in her peculiarly blank beauty, onto which her directors and audiences projected whatever emotion they wished. Fittingly, her greatest performance was as an androgynous cipher who confounded and fascinated her callous French lover in Jean-Luc Godard's *Breathless*—which inaugurates Film Forum's Seberg retrospective, beginning March 15. *Breathless* made Seberg an icon in France; she epitomized a breezy mix of sophistication and American brashness. Still, in her own country, she was more of a curiosity than a peer among contemporaries like Jane Fonda and Vanessa Redgrave, who, like Seberg, acted in some dubious films and delved into sixties radicalism, then were punished for it.

In his imaginative new feature-film docudrama *From the Journals of Jean Seberg* (at Cinema Village and Angelika 57), Mark Rappaport brilliantly illustrates Seberg's hidden self. Mary Beth Hurt portrays the late actress (who committed suicide in 1979) as bitterly amused over the way her life and career imploded: the series of bad films that eroded her girlish charm, her disillusion with Hollywood and America, and her subsequent involvement with the Black Panther movement. The Seberg Rappaport shows us—sharp, witty, and above all, melancholic—never truly surfaced on screen. Seberg wouldn't allow it. Ultimately that may have been her great appeal. Seberg broke the unwritten rule of screen acting: Never look the camera, and the audience, in the eye. She did, expressionless, and allowed us to see whatever we wanted. MAUREEN CALLAHAN

NEW YORK
Herald Tribune

Photograph by Neal Peters Collection.

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Surfside—104th St., Rockaway (945-4632) *Babe; Dead Man Walking; Down Periscope.*

The Movies at Bayside—38–39 Bell Blvd., at 39th Ave. (225-7711) *Babe; Broken Arrow; City Hall; If Lucy Fell; The Postman.*

Trylon—98–81 Queens Blvd., at 66th Ave., Forest Hills (459-8944) *Up Close and Personal.*

Staten Island

Area Code 718

Atrium—680 Arthur Kill Road, nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (317-8300) *Up Close and Personal; Babe; Broken Arrow; City Hall; Happy Gilmore; Homeward Bound II; The Birdcage.* Opening 3/15: *Executive Decision.*

Hylan Plaza—107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (351-0805) *Up Close and Personal; Broken Arrow; Down Periscope; Rumble in the Bronx; The Birdcage.*

The Movies at Staten Island—141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (983-9600) *Up Close and Personal; Broken Arrow; City Hall; Down Periscope; Happy Gilmore; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Homeward Bound II; If Lucy Fell; Mr. Holland's Opus; Muppet Treasure Island; The Postman; Rumble in the Bronx; The Birdcage.*

Museums, Societies, Etc.

American Museum of Natural History—*Destiny in Space* and *Titanica.* Central Park West at 79th St. (769-5650); $10 singly; $13 double feature Fri. and Sat. nights.

American Museum of the Moving Image—"The Essential Brando." 3/16: *The Men* (1950) and *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951). 3/17: *The Wild One* (1954), *Meet Marlon Brando* (1965), and *Julius Caesar* (1951). 3601 36th St., Astoria, Queens (entrance on 35th Ave.; 718-784-0077); $5.

Brooklyn Museum—3/15: *Patakin!* (1982). 3/16 and 3/17: *The Language of Foxes* (1992). 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000, ext. 330); $6.

Cine Club—3/16: A series of shorts including *The Pumpkin Race* (1907), *Colour Box* (1935), and *Butterflies* (1905). 32 Second Ave. (718-858-3032); $6.

A Different Light—3/17: *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1953). 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850); free.

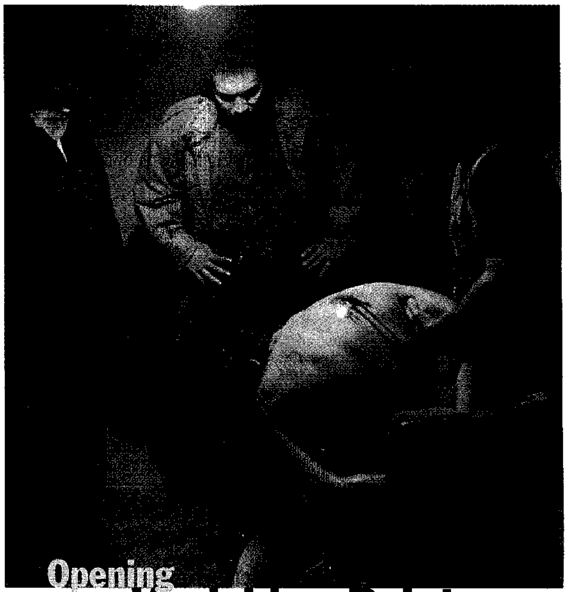
Donnell Media Center—3/12: *Joe's Bed-Stuy Barbershop: We Cut Heads* (1983) and *Clarence and Angel* (1980). 3/14: *Cantico* (1982) and *Finnegan's Wake* (1967). 3/16: *From Shore to Shore: Irish Traditional Music in New York City* (1993) and *Brendan Behan* (1974). 20 W. 53rd St. (621-0619); free.

Film Forum—Through 3/14: *Who Killed Teddy Bear?* (1965). 3/15–3/28: "Jean Seberg." 3/15–3/18: *Breathless* (1959); restored print. 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110); $8.

Film Society of Lincoln Center—(The Walter Reade Theater)—3/12: *Decalogue Five* and *Six* (1988) and *Blue* (1993). 3/13: *Decalogue Seven* and *Eight* (1988) and *White* (1993). 3/14: *Decalogue Nine* and *Ten* (1988) and *Red* (1994). Through 3/28: "Rendez-Vous with French Cinema Today." 3/15 and 3/16: *La Fille Seule* (1995). 3/15 and 3/17: *Le Journal d'un Seducteur* (1995). 3/16: *Le Fabuleux Destin de Madame Petlet* (1995). 3/17: *Haut Bas Fragile* (1994) and *L'Univers de Jacques Demy* (1995). 65 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600); $7.50.

French Institute—3/12: *Le the au harem d'Archimede* (1985). Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160); $7, seniors, $5.50.

Museum of Modern Art—Through 3/15: "Asta: The Tenth Muse." 3/12: *Sins of the Fathers/The Devil's Assistant* (1912) and *The Militant Suffragette* (1913). 3/14: *Asta Nielsen* (1968) and *Impossible Love* (1932). 3/15: *Hamlet* (1920). Through 3/17: "Samuel Fuller." 3/11: *Merrill's Marauders* (1962) and *The Steel Helmet* (1951). 3/12: *The Baron of Arizona* (1950). 3/16: *The Typewriter, The Rifle, and The Movie Camera* (1995). 3/14–3/21: "Eight Japanese Films." 3/14: *The Life of Oharu* (1952), *Ugetsu/Tales of a Pale and Silvery Moon After Rain* (1953), and *Woman in the Dunes* (1964). 3/15: *Tokyo Story* (1953), *Ohayu/Good Morning* (1959), and *Late Spring* (1949). 3/16: *Rashomon* (1950) and *Dreams* (1990). 3/15 and 3/16: "The Century of Cinema." *One Hundred Years of Japanese Cinema* (1995). 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480); $8.



Opening

Vanishing Point

'Knocks at My Door,' the story of two Latin American nuns who imperil their lives when they harbor a fugitive (Frank Spano, above), won a slew of awards in its native Venezuela and opens at Angelika 57 on March 15.

Museum of Television & Radio—Through 5/18: "Directed by John Frankenheimer: The Television Work." 25 W. 52nd St. (621-6710); $6.

School of Visual Arts—"Saul Bass." 209 E. 23rd St. (679-7350); free.

Symphony Space—3/19: *The 400 Blows* (1959) and *An Autumn Afternoon* (1962). 2537 Broadway (864-5400); $7.

Whitney Museum of American Art—"Gregory J. Markopoulos." 3/13: *Himself As Herself* (1967). 3/14: *The Illiac Passion* (1966) and *Test With Masks for the Illiac Passion* (1966). 3/15 and 3/17: *Gammelion* (1968). 3/16: *The Divine Damnation* (1968). 3/17: *(A)lter (A)ction* (1968) and *Die Schachtel* (1968). 3/9: *Serenity* (1961), *The Filming of Twice a Man* (1963), and *Twice a Man* (1963). 3/10: *Galaxie* (1966). 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (717-0723); $8.

Movie Listings Online

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Photograph courtesy of International Film Circuit.

art

Callahan...Ruley...Grosvenor

Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Joe Andoe—Paintings on paper of his familiar horses and horse heads and more-recent images of oak leaves; through 4/20. Winston Wächter, 111 E. 65th St. (327-2526).

Pierre Bonnard—Watercolors and drawings ranging in date from 1891 to 1945, including , among other works, studies for commercial posters, designs for four folding screens, designs for sheet covers for the music of his brother-in-law, and a project for an illustrated alphabet for children; through 3/23. Wildenstein, 19 E. 64th St. (517-4715).

Milton W. Brown—Watercolors of still-life arrangements and outdoor scenes by this 84-year-old scholar and expert in American art; 3/16–4/13. Schlesinger, 24 E. 73rd St. (734-3600).

Glenn Goldberg—New paintings from his "Situations" series, whose whimsical play of suggestive formal elements evokes works by Kandinsky, Klimt, and Klee; 3/13–4/6. Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (794-0550).

Reinhoud—Twelve new welded copper and brass sculptures by the Belgian CoBrA artist; 3/14–4/20. Avanti, 22 E. 72nd St. (628-3377).

57th Street Area

Robert Arneson/Philip Wofford—A survey of the late ceramicist's works on paper and canvas/Small-scale relief paintings. Through 3/30. Adams, 50 W. 57th St. (757-6655).

Hugo Bastidas—Monochromatic paintings that combine imagery from memory and photographs and confront such issues as poverty, the destruction of the environment, and the corruption of big government; 3/13–4/13. Haime, 41 E. 57th St. (888-3550).

Drew Beattie and Daniel Davidson—Recent paintings by this collaborative team who work without a preconceived composition on the same canvas at the same time and using the same materials to produce works that simultaneously evoke Brueghel and Bosch, Surrealism, and the cartoon imagery of Philip Guston. Through 3/30. Helman, 20 W. 57th St. (245-2888).

Robert Berlind—Paintings that focus on the patterns and rhythms of nature, as seen in a tree's twisting branches or the ripples and reflections in a pond; through 4/6. De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St. (421-3780).

Carole Naggar—Recent paintings and artist books that are based on the artist's memory and experience of exile; through 3/28. Adine, 5 E. 57th St. (826-9750).

Vija Celmins—Night-sky paintings and drawings from 1994 to 1996; through 4/5. McKee, 745 Fifth Ave. (688-5951).

Jean Dubuffet—Paintings, drawings, and sculpture from the fifties, including examples of his butterfly and leaf collages; through 3/23. PaceWildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. (421-3292).

Alan Feltus—Paintings of figures in classical narrative vignettes; 3/14–4/13. Forum, 745 Fifth Ave. (355-4545).

Morris Graves—Paintings and drawings made between 1935 and 1955; through 3/30. Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St. (888-1122).

Keith Haring—A selection of paintings and sculpture made between 1981 and 1989; through 3/23. Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (752-0124).

Valerie Jaudon—Recent abstract paintings; through 3/23. Janis, 110 W. 57th St. (586-0110).

Ground Rules:

Galleries are generally open Tues. through Sat., from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

Bill Jensen—Pencil drawings executed at the artist's summer studio in Italy during 1995, a single large charcoal drawing, and a gouache painting; through 4/13. Washburn, 20 W. 57th St. (397-6780).

Jane Kaplowitz—New paintings on the theme of the Lucchino Visconte film *Death in Venice,* executed in a neo-Warholian style based on photographic images; 3/13–4/13. McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. (319-1996).

David Kroll/Eric Blum—Recent paintings of still life set against romantic landscapes/Oil-and-beeswax portraits of nymphlike girls. Through 3/30. Littlejohn Contemporary, 41 E. 57th St. (980-2323).

John Laub—Paintings of landscapes in the Adirondacks, Fire Island, and Martha's Vineyard; through 4/6. Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. (759-2345).

On View

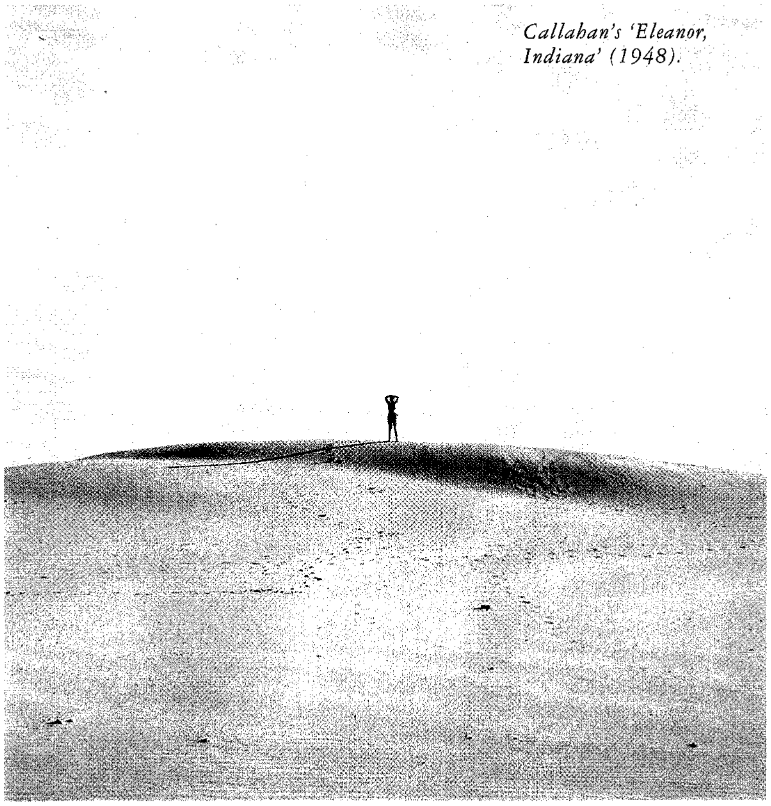
Photo Op

Forced to travel to Washington for Vermeer, to Philadelphia for Brancusi (and, soon enough, for Cézanne), New Yorkers have every reason to feel upstaged. The latest affront—a retrospective of the photography of Harry Callahan at the National Gallery of Art—requires that they make it to Washington, D.C., by May 19 or wait until fall, when the show makes its second appearance, at the Philadelphia Museum of Art (it then moves on to Atlanta, Detroit, and Chicago).

What New Yorkers *do* have close at hand, however, is an opportunity to reflect on the relationship between works by the 83-year-old Callahan (in a tidy survey at PaceWildenstein-MacGill; through April 6) and those of his mentor, Ansel Adams (in a large survey of his close-up views of nature at ICP Midtown; through June 2).

Seen in the context of each other's work, Adams's influence on Callahan—they met in 1941 when Callahan attended a workshop Adams conducted in Detroit—is as clear as both photographers' prints. Through Adams, Callahan learned the exacting techniques that would enhance his poetic eye. "Ansel put his pictures up and that was what did it for me," said Callahan. "They really had tone and texture with no monkey business."

EDITH NEWHALL



Callahan's 'Eleanor, Indiana' (1948).

Jacques Lipshitz—More than 80 sculptures from the pre-Cubist and Cubist period, produced between 1910 and 1940, when the artist was living in Paris; 3/13–4/13. Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (541-4900).

Andrew Masullo—Pop-ish, thick-surfaced paintings of bars, stripes, lozenges, heraldic shields, and other geometric and emblematic shapes; through 3/30. Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (752-0124).

Donna Moylan—Paintings on the themes of money, war, and work; through 4/6. Baldacci, 41 E. 57th St. (826-4210).

Anne-Françoise Potterat—Small-scale abstract paintings whose decorative motifs overlaid with diagrammatic compositions, symbols, and writing suggest light passing through a Persian mosque; through 4/22. Richart, 7 E. 55th St. (371-9369).

Jon Schueler—A survey of his abstract paintings from the fifties made in New York, Scotland, and Paris; through 3/30. ACA, 41 E. 57th St. (644-8300).

Thomas Schütte—The German artist's third exhibition at this gallery consists of new larger-than-life figures in cast aluminum and wooden table sculptures; through 4/20. Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. (977-7160).

Hiroshi Senju—Paintings of waterfalls that employ traditional Japanese painting methods; through 4/13. Davidson, 41 E. 57th St. (759-7555).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Don Ahn—Paintings that combine natural imagery and abstraction; through 3/28. Wickiser, 568 Broadway (941-1817).

Louise Belcourt—New abstract paintings; through 3/23. Sundvik, 26 Grand St. (226-6361).

Janet Biggs—A multimedia installation of video and still photography that explores girls' fascination with horses; through 4/6. Chassie Post, 453 Broome St. (966-4229).

Robert Burke/Matt Marello—New paintings based on Giotto's *Vices and Virtues* that combine overlapping stencil images, jutting marks, washes and spills, and graphic, drawn areas/Altered movie posters and trailers; through 3/23. Collins, 83 Grand St. (226-1861).

Gregory Corn—Recent steel sculptures in which interlocking shapes are held together through suspension and tension; through 3/30. Artstark, 568 Broadway (431-7334).

Chiara Dynys—Three-dimensional geometric wall pieces made from marble, resin, and porcelain; through 4/13. Cristinerose, 395 W. Broadway (431-1862).

Leon Golub—New paintings from the series "Snake Eyes" and paintings from the series "Sphinx & Other Enigmas" that were made between 1952 and 1956; through 3/30. Feldman, 31 Mercer St. (226-3232).

Robert Grosvenor—Two large-scale sculptures produced within the past two years, through 3/23, at Cooper, 155 Wooster St. (674-0766), and a selection of the sculptor's drawings from 1969 to 1994, through 3/23, at Markey, 55 Vandam St. (627-4446).

Rohan Harris/Lucy Mackenzie—Small-scale wall sculptures of beeswax, metal, fabric, and wood/Small paintings, drawings, and assemblages. Through 4/17. Hoffman, 429 W. Broadway (966-6676).

David Hunter—Paintings on fiberglass-coated aluminum panels and in gouache on paper that use the same format—a black band on the right abuts a square of a light color on the left—and whose surfaces depict a subtle tracery of lines, arcs, and perpendiculars drawn with graphite and a razor blade; through 3/30. CRG, 93 Grand St. (966-4360).

Y. Z. Kami—New works, including painted portraits and blown-up manipulated photographs; through 3/30. Solomon, 172 Mercer St. (941-5777).

Dennis Kardon—Recent figurative paintings; through 3/30. Anderson, 476 Broome St. (431-8547).

Lani Maestro—Three installations that question preconceived notions about immigration, exile, origin, and identity, by an artist who lives in Montreal; through 4/13. Art in General, 79 Walker St. (219-0473).

Beatriz Milhazes—Sumptuously colored paintings whose decorative motifs of ruffles, medallions, flowers, necklaces, and other images are transferred onto canvas using a monotype-like technique; through 4/13. Thorp, 103 Prince St. (431-6880).

John L. Moore—Recent paintings on paper that depict his trademark motifs of black and colored ovoid shapes; through 3/30. M-13, 72 Greene St. (925-3007).

Robert Murray—Selected small sculptures from the eighties and nineties; through 4/6. Zarre, 48 Greene St. (966-2222).

Dona Nelson—Paintings in a series titled "Paradox Lake" that reflect the artist's specific experiences of landscape, such as sight and sound, as well as her spontaneous response to materials as the works are being made; through 4/6. Klein, 40 Wooster St. (431-1980).

Debra Priestly—Paintings from the artist's "Caddisworm Chronicles" series that draw on her childhood memories; through 3/28. Kelly, 591 Broadway (226-1660).

Richard Pugliese—New abstract paintings; through 3/23. Condeso/Lawler, 524 Broadway (219-1283).

Bill Richards—Mixed-media paintings of urns adorned with the doodles of the physically and psychologically traumatized children the artist has worked with over the past 30 years, and since 1989, as the director of the Harlem Horizon Art Studio; through 4/13. Ricco/Maresca, 152 Wooster St. (780-0071).

Julia Scher—A multimedia installation titled *American Fibroids*; through 4/6. Rosen, 130 Prince St. (941-0203).

Julian Schnabel—Recent large-scale paintings in a series titled "The Conversion of St. Paolo Malfi" that were painted in memory of Paolo Malfi, an Italian artist and friend of the artist's who was tragically killed in Rome in 1995; through 3/23. PaceWildenstein, 142 Greene St. (431-9224), and Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. (431-3685).

Gary Simmons—Three large-scale chalk drawings executed directly on the gallery's black, chalkboard-surfaced walls that expand on the artist's familiar vocabulary of cartoon imagery laden with racial stereotypes; through 4/13. Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St. (925-8335).

E. E. Smith/Susan Wides—Photo-based oil prints of interiors, still lifes, and portraits/Photographs exploring the name of the rose; 3/16–4/13. Foster, 62 Crosby St. (966-9024).

Gwenn Thomas/Judy Natal—Works that begin with collages of paper strips, corrugated plastic board, and packing tape, which are then photographed and printed on photo-sensitive linen and stretched as canvases/Photographic triptychs and collages. Through 4/6. API, 470 Broome St. (343-2599).

Peter Voulkos/Darren Waterston—Recent wood-fired ceramic works in the artist's signature "plate" and "stack" forms/Atmospheric landscape paintings that depict nature between twilight and night. Through 3/23. Cowles, 415 W. Broadway (925-3500).

Kara Walker—Cut-paper silhouettes that depict black figures in melodramatic narratives on the theme of slavery; through 4/13. Wooster Gardens, 558 Broadway (941-6210).

Nari Ward—An installation titled *Happy Smilers* that reflects the overlapping of the artist's experience as a child growing up in Jamaica and as an artist working in Harlem, which transforms the entrance of the gallery into a duty-free shop playing island music and its main room into a contemplative space of urban detritus; through 4/6. Deitch Projects, 76 Grand St. (343-7300).

Daniel Weiner/Robert Melee—Biomorphic polychromed sculptures that hang from the ceiling/An installation inspired by haunting childhood memories. Through 3/30. Bravin Post Lee, 80 Mercer St. (966-2676).

Kevin Wixted—Paintings whose abstract renderings of invented space make reference to architectural forms; through 3/23. Beitzel, 102 Prince St. (219-2863).

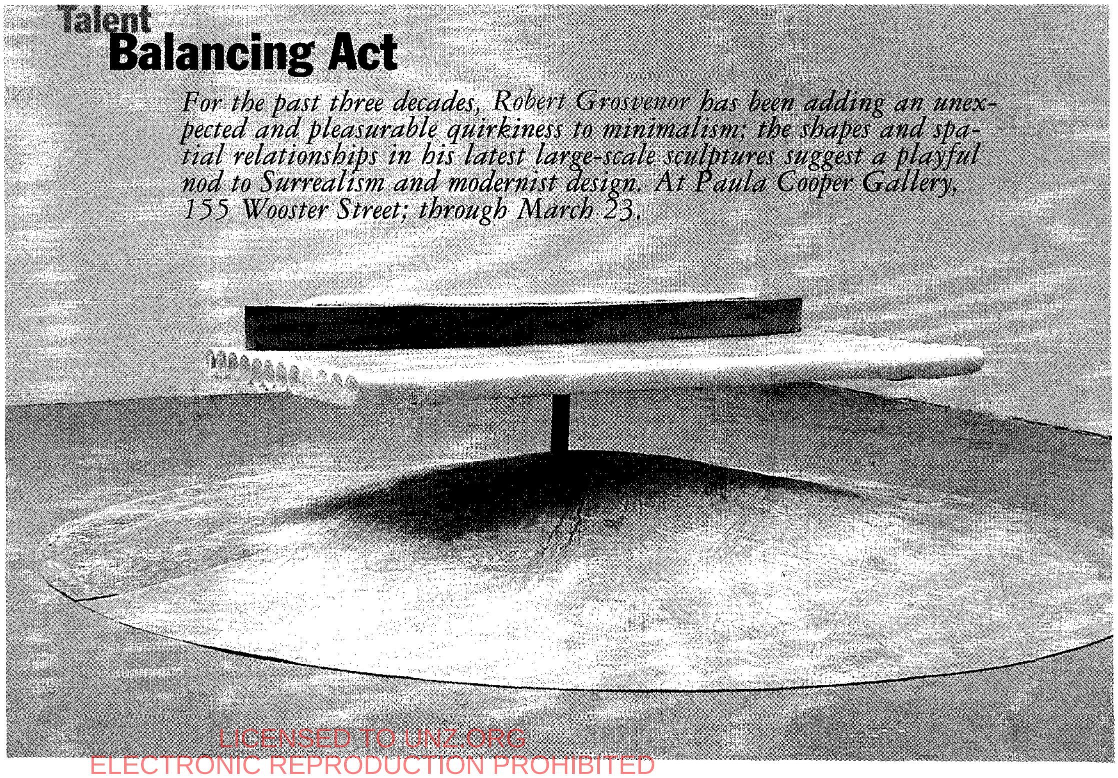
Steve Wolfe/Stephen Prina—Studies for his book and book-in-carton sculptures/A series of photographs combined with computer graphics. Through 3/30. Luhring Augustine, 130 Prince St. (219-9600).

Betty Woodman—New ceramic works, including a series of wall pieces titled "Balustrade Vases" that combine window motifs, architectural details, and vases, as well as a 23-foot-by-3-foot wainscotting inspired by Egyptian wall painting, and a selection of drawings; through 3/23. Protetch, 560 Broadway (966-5454).

Jan Zakrzewski—Paintings and drawings of landscapes and people overlaid with abstract passages; through 3/30. TZ'Art & Co., 28 Wooster St. (966-9059).

Other

Ghada Amer—Embroidered paintings in which the



Talent

Balancing Act

For the past three decades, Robert Grosvenor has been adding an unexpected and pleasurable quirkiness to minimalism; the shapes and spatial relationships in his latest large-scale sculptures suggest a playful nod to Surrealism and modernist design. At Paula Cooper Gallery, 155 Wooster Street; through March 23.

outlines of women in poses taken from pornographic magazines are sewn directly onto the canvas; 3/16–4/11. Nosei, 530 W. 22nd St. (741-8695), Wed.–Sun. 11–6.

Roni Horn—Five new installations that utilize a wide range of materials and media, among them gold, rubber, plastic, and photography; through 4/14. Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. (861-9455), Thurs.–Sun. 12–6.

Mike Parr—A series of 48 drypoint etchings from the ongoing work, *The Self-Portrait Project*, that examine conventions and assumptions of self-portraiture through the medium of printmaking; through 4/6. New York Studio School, 8 W. 8th St. (673-6466), Mon.–Fri. 10–6, Sat. 10–4.

Randy Walz/David Storey—Large-scale paintings whose colors and bold, abstract shapes are inspired by the artist's trips to Mexico and the Southwest/In his first solo show of drawing, the artist takes a wry look at some of the pillars of modernism, among them Wifredo Lam, Picasso, and Miró. Through 3/24. Morris Healy, 530 W. 22nd St. (243-3753).

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Beacon Hill—980 Madison Ave. (734-3636). "Water, Water, Everywhere," with American nineteenth-century and Impressionist paintings and watercolors by Anderson, Bricher, Cropsey, Farrer, Prendergast, Richards, and others; through 4/6.

Davis & Langdale—231 E. 60th St. (838-0333). Paintings and works on paper by three generations of Bloomsbury artists, including paintings and drawings by Vanessa Bell (1879–1961) and pottery by her son Quentin Bell (born 1910) and by his daughter, Cressida Bell (born 1959); through 4/13.

Hirschl & Adler—21 E. 70th St. (535-8810). "200 Years of Printmaking in America," with works by Audubon, Bellows, Hassam, Lazzell, Lozowick, Storrs, Whistler, others; through 4/20.

Reinhold Brown—26 E. 78th St. (734-7999). An exhibition celebrating landmark exhibitions of the works of Marcel Duchamp through original works, posters, and documents; through 5/5.

57th Street Area

Baron/Boisanté—50 W. 57th St. (581-9191). Works that incorporate animal imagery by Curtis Anderson, Donald Baechler, Joseph Beuys, Michael Byron, Ingrid Dinter, Malcolm Morley, Pablo Picasso, and others; through 3/23.

French—24 W. 57th St. (247-2457). Paintings of the Ohio River and its landscape by Atkinson, Bogosian, Briggs, Schweigart, Sullivan, Wagener, Zigmond; through 3/30.

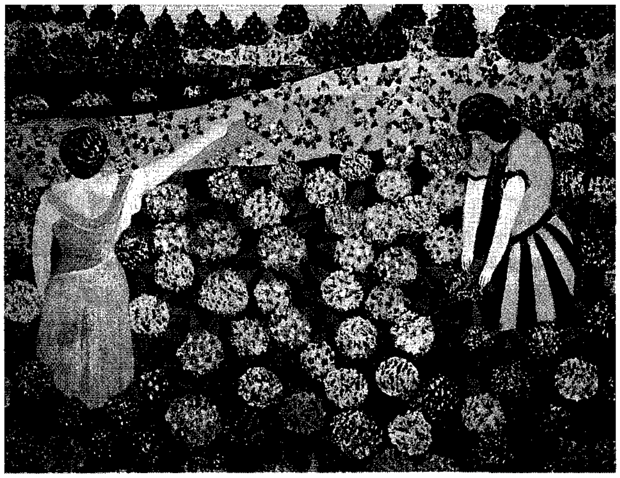
Rosenfeld—24 W. 57th St. (247-0082). This gallery's third survey of twentieth-century African-American art includes works by Charles Alston, Beauford Delaney, Augusta Savage, Bob Thompson, Hale Woodruff, and others; through 4/6.

SoHo and TriBeCa

Boone—417 W. Broadway (431-1818). Large-scale wall reliefs by Leonardo Drew, paintings by Mark Francis, and knitted mylar sculptures by Oliver Herring; through 4/27.

Clocktower—108 Leonard St. (233-1096); Thurs. and Fri. 4–10, Sat. and Sun. 1–7. "Model Home," an exhibit that explores issues of style, taste, design, and aesthetics in the domestic environment, with works in various media by more than 60 artists, among them Angela Bulloch, Sarah Charlesworth, Robert Gober, Frank Moore, Elaine Reichek, Haim Steinbach, and Lawrence Weiner; through 3/31.

Einstein—591 Broadway (226-1414). Prints that depict the face and figure, by Jack Beal, Eric Fischl, Red Grooms, Philip Pearlstein, Larry Rivers, and others; through 3/30.



Retrospective **"Discovering Ellis Ruley" gathers the whimsical paintings of Ellis Ruley (1882–1959), a self-taught black artist from Norwich, Connecticut, whose themes included popular culture, nature, and the pleasures of simple farm life. At the Museum of American Folk Art, 2 Lincoln Square; through April 28.**

Exit Art/The First World—548 Broadway (966-7745). Curated by Brian Wallis, "Counterculture: Alternative Information From the Underground Press to the Internet" examines the role of the alternative media in fostering social, cultural, and political change in America from 1965 to the present; through 4/13.

Golden—39 Wooster St. (274-0080). "The Human Condition," with works by Brewster, Cowin, Friedman, Min, Perna, Phillips, Sanchez, Ségalove, Souza, Troger; through 4/6.

Ingbar—568 Broadway (334-1100). Images of the Empire State Building by 24 artists; through 4/27.

Kent—67 Prince St. (966-4500). "Light Into Darkness," with works by Adams, Brauntuch, Brill, Burden, Kearns, Ladda, Messner, Petlin; through 4/20.

Ross—568 Broadway (343-2161). Large-scale drawings by Birch, Fasnacht, Leach-Jones, Marks, Napierala, Newman, Rabkin, Spero, Thompson, Wye; through 4/13.

Other

Rotunda—33 Clinton St., Brooklyn (718-875-4047). "Design Brooklyn," with contemporary furniture, ceramics, and works in metal and glass by 40 Brooklyn-affiliated artists; 3/15–4/27.

St. Marks Position—20 St. Marks Pl. (475-1644). The gallery's inaugural exhibition features new installations by Sol LeWitt, Lisa Hein, and Elana Herzog; through 4/6.

Photography

Thomas Barrow—Vintage diptychs from the early seventies that comprised the series Pink Stuff and Pink Dualities and drew their primary imagery from objects of popular culture; through 4/13. Miller, 138 Spring St. (226-1220).

Harry Callahan—Photographs from the forties to the present, including works that have not been previously exhibited; through 4/6. PaceWildenstein-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (759-7999).

Bruce Cratsley—A retrospective of work from 1976 through 1995, including portraits of friends and images of tabletop arrangements of curious objects, mannequins in street windows, museum interiors, and Gay Parade participants in drag; through 3/23. Richardson, 560 Broadway (343-0839).

Jedd Devine—Recent photographs that pair still-life objects, such as skulls and melons, for their unexpected resemblances to each other; through 4/13. Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. (517-3766).

Macduff Everton—Recent panoramic views of Iceland, Chile, India, France, and America; through 3/23. Borden, 560 Broadway (431-0166).

Candida Höfer—Recent color photographs of zoological gardens and interiors of public buildings; through 3/23. Sonnabend, 420 W. Broadway (966-6160).

ICP—1130 Fifth Ave. (860-1777); Wed.–Sun. 11–6; $4, $2.50 students and seniors. "Fazal Sheikh: A Sense of Common Ground." Portraits of refugees from Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Rwanda, and Mozambique living in the African camps; "Highlights from the ICP Permanent Collection: One Hundred Years of Documentary Photography and Photojournalism"; through 3/31.

ICP Midtown—1133 Sixth Ave. (860-1783), Tues. 11–8, Wed.-Sun. 11–6. "Intimate Nature: Ansel Adams and the Close View." Photographs that depict the minute, specific aspects of nature; through 6/2. . . . "Country Beside Itself: Lars Tunbjörk." Photographs of Swedes enjoying leisure time; through 3/22.

Connie Imboden/Victor Friedman—Images of nude figures photographed in water/Large-scale photographs of still life and nudes. Through 4/13. Witkin, 415 W. Broadway (925-5510).

Builder Levy—Photographs of Appalachian coal miners taken between 1968 and 1982; through 3/30. OK Harris, 383 W. Broadway (431-3600).

Fred W. McDarrah—Photographs of Barnett Newman, Franz Kline, Andy Warhol, Jasper Johns, and other New York artists taken between 1958 and 1978; through 3/23. Art et Industrie, 52 Thompson St. (966-6800).

Ray K. Metzker—Black-and-white abstract cameraless photographs that were made using light as a source for drawing; through 4/13. Miller, 138 Spring St. (226-1220).

Sheila Metzner/Judith Joy Ross—Large-scale photographs taken in Venezuela, Alaska, the Brazilian rainforests, and the American West/A series of photographs taken at the Hazelton Public Schools in Hazelton, Pennsylvania, between 1992 and 1994. Through 4/6. Danziger, 130 Prince St. (226-0056).

Catherine Opie—Platinum photographs of Los Angeles freeways and large color photographs of the façades of houses in Beverly Hills; through 3/30. Gorney, 100 Greene St. (966-4480).

Richard Pousette-Dart—The photographer, who was better known as an abstract painter, began taking these pictures of people in and around his circle of New York artists in the mid-forties; through 4/13. Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. (752-1223).

Mark Sink/ Penny Mailander—Images of the nude figure by both; 3/14–4/27. Rice, 325 W. 11th St. (366-6660).

Arthur Tress—A survey of photographs taken between 1968 and 1972, including works from the series "Open Space in the Inner City," "Dream Collector," and "Theatre of the Mind"; 3/14–5/11.

David Vestal—Photographs of New York from the forties through the sixties; through 4/27. Mann, 42 E. 76th St. (570-1223).

Museums

Alternative Museum—"Mei-Ling Hom: Offering." A mixed-media installation that reflects on the ancient Chinese ritual of grave sweeping, which is part of Chinese ancestor worship; through 4/6. . . . "Saiman Li: Photography." Self-portraits inscribed with digitally manipulated text and graphics appropriated from immigration and other identification documents; through 4/6. 594 Broadway (226-2158), Tues.—Sat. 11–6; $3 donation suggested.

American Academy of Arts and Letters—Audubon Terrace, Broadway at 155th St. (368-5900); Tues.–Sun. 1–4. "American Academy Invitational Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture." Works by 30 contemporary American artists, 8 of whom will be chosen to receive awards from the Academy; through 3/31.

American Museum of Natural History—"Amber: Window to the Past." A history of amber in fossil specimens and decorative objects; through 9/2. . . .

"Witness: Endangered Species of North America." Photographs of animals and plants in immediate danger of extinction; through 10/6. Central Park West at 79th St. (769-5100); Sun.–Thurs. 10–5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10–8:45; $7 suggested contribution, $5 students and seniors, $4 children.

Asia Society—"Points of View: Selections From the Permanent Collection"; through 5/5. 725 Park Ave. (288-6400); Tues.–Sat. 11–6 (Thurs. 6–8 free), Sun. 12–5; $3; $1 seniors and students.

Bronx Museum of the Arts—"Bronx Spaces." Works by 23 Bronx-based artists; through 6/23. . . . "Amidst the Silence: Enrique Martinez Celaya and Alberto Rey': through 6/23. . . . "Women of Hope: African Americans and Latinas Who Made a Difference"; through 6/23. 1040 Grand Concourse, Bronx (718-681-6000); Wed. 3–9, Thurs. and Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 1–6; $3, $2 students, $1 seniors.

Brooklyn Museum—"Converging Cultures: Art & Identity in Spanish America." Paintings, sculpture, costumes, textiles, domestic and religious objects, and manuscripts from the Spanish colonial vice-royalties of New Spain and Peru; through 7/14. . . . "Alone in a Crowd: Prints of the 1930s–1940s by African-American Artists From the Collection of Reba and Dave Williams"; through 4/21. . . . "Early Renaissance Paintings From the Brooklyn Museum." The museum's own collection of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Italian panel paintings; through 8/31. . . . "Alison Saar: The Woods Within." A site-specific sculpture installation; through 9/8. . . . "Elsa Schiaparelli: Surrealism in Fashion From the Brooklyn Museum"; through 3/24. 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); Wed.–Sun. 10–5; $4, $2 students, $1.50 seniors.

Dia Center for the Arts—"Jessica Stockholder: Your Skin in This Weather Bourne Eye-Threads & Swollen Perfume"; through 6/23. . . . "European Couples, and Others: Works by Dan Flavin"; through 6/23 . . . . "Komar and Melamid: The Most Wanted Painting on the Web"; through 6/23. . . . "Gerhard Richter: Atlas"; through 6/23. 548 W. 22nd St. (989-5912); Thurs.–Sun. 12–6; $3 suggested contribution.

El Museo del Barrio—"Leandro Katz: Two Projects/A Decade." Two photographic installation works by the writer, filmmaker, and visual artist; through 5/5. . . . "Portrait: A Site-Specific installation by Carla Preiss"; through 4/7. . . . "Recent Acquisitions: Works From the Permanent Collection"; through 5/6. . . . "Historia de la Isla: Graphic Works by Puerto Rican Artists, 1968–1980"; through 4/7. 1230 Fifth Ave. (831-7272); Wed.–Sun. 11–5, Thurs. 12–7; $4, $2 seniors and students.

Frick Collection—"Greuze, a Portraitist for the 90s." A selection of pastel portraits by Jean-Baptiste Greuze (1725–1805) that were made in Paris in the 1790s; through 4/21. 1 E. 70th St. (288-0700); Tues.–Sat. 10–6, Sun. 1–6; $5, $3 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Guggenheim Museum—"Abstraction in the Twentieth Century: Total Risk, Freedom, Discipline." The history of abstraction, from paintings made as early as 1912 by Mondrian, Kandinsky, and Malevich, to works made by Frank Stella and Richard Long specifically for this exhibition; through 5/12. 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (423-3500); Sun.–Wed. 10–6, Fri. and Sat. 10–8 (Fri. 6–8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; $8, $5 students and seniors.

Japan Society—"Rainbows and Shimmering Bridges: Contemporary Japanese Lacquerware"; through 4/7. 333 E. 47th St. (832-1155), Tues.–Sun. 11–5; $3 suggested contribution.

Jewish Museum—"Too Jewish? Challenging Traditional Identities"; through 7/14. . . . "Recent Acquisitions 1993 to 1995." 1109 Fifth Ave. (423-3200); Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11–5:45, Tues. 11–8 (Tues. after 5 free); $7, $5 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art—"Splendors of Imperial China: Treasures From the National Palace Museum, Taipei." The full breadth of Chinese art is displayed in this exhibit of 475 objects from the Neolithic period through the eighteenth century, including paintings, calligraphy, ceramics, and jades; 3/19–5/19. . . . "Fabergé in America." All of the 400 objects in this exhibition were collected by Americans, including 15 of the 44 extant Imperial Easter Eggs commissioned by the last Russian czars; through 4/28. . . "Poussin: Works on Paper, Drawings From the Collection of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II"; through 3/31. . . . "French Seventeenth-Century Drawings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art"; through 3/31. . . . "Klee in Munich." One in a series of continuing installations from the Berggruen Klee Collection, which was a gift to the museum in 1984, this exhibit traces the artist's stylistic development during his most formative period; through 6/30. . . . "Pergamon: The Telephos Frieze From the Great Altar." Forty marble sculptures from the Pergamon Museum in Berlin that once decorated the Great Altar of Pergamon in the citadel of Pergamon in northwest Asia Minor; through 4/14. . . "Haute Couture"; through 3/30. . . . "Textiles of Late Antiquity"; through 4/30. . . . "Picturing Paradise: Colonial Photography of Samoa, 1875–1925"; through 4/4. . . . "Enamels of Limoges"; through 6/16. . . . "Works Progress Administration Color Prints in the Metropolitan"; through 6/16. 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (879-5500); Tues.–Thurs. and Sun. 9:30–5:15, Fri. and Sat. 9:30–9; $7 contribution, $3.50 children and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (923-3700); Tues.-Sun. 9:30–4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September).

Museum for African Art—"Memory: Luba Art and the Making of History." An exhibit of sculpture, memory boards, beaded objects, ornamented royal scepters, and other arts of the Luba of Zaire from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries; through 9/8. 593 Broadway (966-1313); Tues.–Fri. 10:3440–5:30, Sat. and Sun. 12–6; $4, $2 children, seniors, and students.

Museum of American Folk Art—"Discovering Ellis Ruley." Paintings by the self-taught African-American artist (1882–1959) from Norwich, Connecticut; through 4/28. 2 Lincoln Square (595-9533); Tues.–Sun. 11:30–7:30; free.

Museum of Modern Art—"Brancusi: Selected Masterworks from the Musée National d'Art Moderne and the Museum of Modern Art, New York"; through 4/23. . . . "Roy DeCarava." A survey of the photographer's works, from his pictures of everyday life in Harlem, through the civil-rights protests of the early sixties, to his recent lyrical studies of nature; through 5/7. . . . "From the Collection: Abstraction, Pure and Impure"; through 5/21. . . . "Deformations: Aspects of the Modern Grotesque"; through 5/21. . . . "Sol LeWitt Prints 1970–1995." More than 200 of the artist's prints, ranging from his early, austere screenprints to the baroque, undulating woodcuts of 1995; through 5/7. . . . "Michael Schmidt: U-NI-TY." Black-and-white photographs by the German photographer that are a meditation on national identity and history; through 3/26. . . . "Lilly Reich: Designer and Architect." Drawings and documentary photographs of exhibition installations and furniture and product designs by the influential German architect and designer (1885–1947); through 5/7. 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480); Sat.–Tues. 11–6, Thurs. and Fri. noon–8:30, closed Wed.; $8, $5 students and seniors (Thurs. and Fri. 5:30–8:30, pay what you wish).

Museum of the City of New York—"Gaelic Gotham: A History of the Irish in New York"; 3/16–10/27. . . . "The Talk of the Town: Rea Irvin of *The New Yorker*." Original covers, drawings, and cartoons by *The New Yorker*'s first art director, from the museum's own collection; through 5/5. . . "Growing Up in New York: The Photography of Arthur Leipzig." Photographs of New York City and its street life taken during the forties and fifties; through 3/31. 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (534-1672); Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 1–5; $5, $3 students and seniors.

National Academy of Design—"The Figure in American Sculpture: A Question of Modernity." Organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, this exhibition explores the basic concepts of early-twentieth-century modernism through the works of 80 figurative sculptors, among them Alexander Calder, José de Creeft, Harriet Frishmuth, Malvina Hoffman, Paul Manship, and Isamu Noguchi; through 5/5. . . . "Rodin: Sculpture From the Collection of Iris and B. Gerald Cantor"; through 5/19. . . . "American Masterworks From The National Academy of Design Collection"; through 5/25. 1083 Fifth Ave. (369-4880); Tues.–Sat. 11:30–5:30 (Fri. until 8); $5, $3.50 seniors, students, and children under 16.

New Museum of Contemporary Art—"A Labor of Love." Works by more than 40 contemporary artists who use handmade folk- or craft-oriented processes to create their work; through 4/14. 583 Broadway (219-1222); Wed., Thurs., Fri., Sat. 12–8 (6–8 free), Sun. 12–6; $4, $3 artists, students, and seniors.

New York Public Library—"The Hand of the Poet: Original Manuscripts by 100 Masters." This exhibit of original manuscripts from the Berg Collection's holdings includes such treasures as the typescript of T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* with handwritten corrections by Ezra Pound; through 4/27. Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (869-8089); Mon. 10–6, Tues.–Wed. 11–6, Thurs.–Sat. 10–6; free.

New-York Historical Society—"New York Then and Now: The Upper West Side." Vintage photographs of New York's Upper West Side from the Society's permanent collection; through 5/19. . . . "Wrought in Common Clay: New York Stoneware From the Collection of the New-York Historical Society"; through 4/7. . . . "In Cold Blood: Five Murders That Shocked New York"; through 4/7. 2 W. 77th St. (873-3400); Wed.–Sun. noon–5; $3, $1 seniors and children.

Pierpont Morgan Library—"The Art of the Brontës: Drawings and Manuscripts." Drawings and manuscripts by Charlotte, Anne, Emily, and Branwell Brontë; through 4/14. . . . "A Great Heritage: Renaissance and Baroque Drawings from Chatsworth"; through 4/21. 29 E. 36th St. (685-0008); Tues.–Fri. 10:30–5, Sat. 10:30–6, Sun. noon–6; $5 suggested donation, $3 students and seniors.

South Street Seaport Museum—"Sacred Waters." More than 40 works by contemporary Outsider artists, among them Thorton Dial, Sr., Sam Doyle, Sister Gertrude Morgan, Elijah Pierce, and Alfred Wallis; through 5/1. 207 Front St. (748-8600); Wed.–Mon. 10–5 (closed Tues.); $6, $5 seniors, $4 students, $3 children.

Studio Museum in Harlem—"Explorations in the City of Light: African-American Artists in Paris, 1945–1965"; through 6/2. . . . "The Listening Sky: An Inaugural Exhibition of the Studio Museum in Harlem Sculpture Garden"; through 8/25. 144 W. 125th St. (864-4500); Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 1–6; $5, $3 students and seniors.

Whitney Museum of American Art—"Kienholz: A Retrospective." The first museum retrospective of the artist's own work and his twenty years of collaborations with his wife and partner, Nancy Reddin Kienholz, including more than 100 pieces ranging from intimate objects to house-scale environments; through 6/2. . . . "Collection in Context—Joseph Cornell: Cosmic Travels"; through 3/10. 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (570-3676); Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 11–6, Thurs. 1–8; $8, $6 students and seniors (free Thurs. 6–8).

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris—"Matthew McCaslin: Harnessing Nature"; through 3/29. Park Ave. at 42nd St. (878-2550); Mon.–Fri. 11–6 (Thurs. to 7:30); free.

Auctions

Christie's—502 Park Ave. (546-1000). 3/13 at 10: "American Paintings." On view from 3/8. 3/15 at 10: "Rugs and Carpets." On view from 3/9.

Christie's East—219 E. 67th St. (546-1000). 3/13 at at 10 and 2: "Sports Memorabilia." On view from 3/9. 3/18 at 1: "20th-Century Decorative Arts." On view from 3/14.

Sotheby's—York Ave. at 72nd St. (606-7000). 3/14 at at 10:15 and 2: "American Paintings." On view from 3/9. 3/16 at 10:15: "Space." On view from 3/9. 3/16 at 2: "Einstein." On view from 3/9.

Swann—104 E. 25th St. (254-4710). 3/14 at 10:30: "The Leo Lerman Collection." On view from 3/9.

theater

Long Live *The King*...A. Wilson...Bill Play

Broadway

Previews and Openings

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum—A new revival of the 1962 musical, featuring Nathan Lane as that sly guy Pseudolus. $25–$70. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Beginning previews 3/18 for a 4/18 opening. *St. James Theatre, 246 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Getting Away With Murder—The ads and press for this show take pains to emphasize that it *isn't* a musical—and for what other writer would it be considered necessary to point that out besides Stephen Sondheim? With collaborator George Furth, Broadway's preeminent purveyor of sophisticated dissonances has turned his attention to a straight play in the comedy-thriller vein, in which a crew of neurotic New Yorkers gather on the Upper West Side for a group-therapy session only to learn that their psychologist may have encountered foul play. With John Rubenstein, Terrence Mann, and Christine Ebersole; directed by Jack O'Brien. $30–$55. Tues.– Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2 , Sun. at 3. Opening 3/17. *Broadhurst Theatre, 235 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Inherit the Wind—Since it opened on Broadway in 1955, there's been literally no time when Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee's fictionalized version of the Scopes "Monkey" trial—the 1925 court case pitting biblical against scientific accounts of creation—hasn't been playing *somewhere.* Ironically, its first Broadway revival ever comes at a time when the debate over creationism, originally used by the play's authors as a mere cover for registering outrage against the political depredations of Senator Joseph McCarthy, has (re)emerged as a compelling public issue in its own right. Tony Randall's National Actors Theatre version stars George C. Scott and Charles Durning in the roles based on Clarence Darrow and William Jennings Bryan; theater veterans may recall that Randall himself played E.K. Hornbeck, a character based on H.L. Mencken, in the original production. $20–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opening 3/18; through 4/14. *Royale, 242 W. 45th St. (239-6280).*

The King and I—$25–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Beginning previews 3/15 for a 4/11 opening. *Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd St. (307-4100).*

The Night of the Iguana—Tennessee Williams didn't rely on tricks of dramaturgical strategy to compose his plays; they're written directly from a volatile mixture of emotion and nerve, a manner of working that faltered with the declining energies of his later years. When he was on his game, though, the results were incomparable. Cherry Jones (*The Heiress*) and William Petersen star in this production of Williams's final (1961) commercial and critical success, in which a lusty widow and a defrocked priest seek for some sort of shared solution to the agony of their common loneliness. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. In previews for a 3/21 opening. *Roundabout Stage Right, 1530 Broadway (869-8400).*

Seven Guitars—$15–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 7 through 4/21; thereafter, Sun. performances at 3. Beginning previews 3/17 for a 3/28 opening. *Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. (239-6200).*

Preview
Black and Blue

"Things as they are / Are changed upon the blue guitar," wrote Wallace Stevens. No one knows that better than playwright August Wilson, whose *Seven Guitars,* the flashback-laden story of a blues guitarist's premature death, is the latest installment in his exploration of the black experience in America. *Beginning* previews Sunday at the Walter Kerr Theatre.

Photograph by Joan Marcus.

Ground Rules:

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where half-price tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-880-0740.

Now Playing

Beauty and the Beast—A musical based on a movie based on a fairy tale. Setting box-office and, presumably, merchandising records even as we speak. Christianne Tisdale plays the girl; Jeff McCarthy plays the (hairy) boy. With Tony-award-winning costume design by Ann Hould-Ward. Lyrics by Tim Rice and the late Howard Ashman; score by Alan Menken. $22.50–$67.50. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened: 4/18/94. *Palace Theatre, 1564 Broadway, at 47th St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Bus Stop—After a string of Broadway hits in the fifties including *Come Back, Little Sheba* and *The Dark at the Top of the Stairs,* William Inge saw his carefully drawn portraits of emotionally frustrated, often inarticulate Midwesterners fall out of fashion in the sixties, when they (literally) ceded the stage to flashier sorts of technical experiment. (Back then, playwrights like Lanford Wilson working the same vein of lyrical realism were commonly dismissed by hip theater types as "the Inge fringe.") It's a fate he didn't deserve. This play, one of his best, examines the secret dreams of a saloon singer and a cowboy thrown together in a cafe by a raging snowstorm. $50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Circle in the Square, 1633 Broadway (239-6200).*

Cats—Now and for the foreseeable future. By Andrew Lloyd Webber, of course, with an assist from T. S. Eliot. $37.50–$65. Dark Thurs. Opened: 10/7/82. *Winter Garden Theater, 1634 Broadway, at 50th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Defending the Caveman—Rob Becker's one-man show, which posits a genetically inherited difference from prehistoric days to explain why men ("hunters") and women ("gatherers") get irritated with each other in Bloomingdale's. $44.50 through 3/5; $47.50 thereafter. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 5. *Helen Hayes Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. (228-3626, or just dial CAVEMAN). 1 hr. 40 mins.*

Grease!—A crowd-pleasing, neon-heavy rock-and-roll musical about a group of high-school seniors in 1959. Book, music, and lyrics by Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey; directed and choreographed by Jeff Calhoun. With Jeff Trachta ("The Bold and the Beautiful") as bad boy Danny Zuko and Joe Piscopo ("Saturday Night Live") as the deejay. $30–$67.50. Mon.–Tues., Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6. Opened: 5/11/94. *Eugene O'Neill Theatre, 230 W. 49th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying—Armed only with charming dishonesty, aggressive young striver J. Pierrepont Finch (the role created by Robert Morse) rises swiftly to the top of the corporate world in a new Broadway revival of the 1961 musical. Has much become dated in Shepherd Mead's classic farce about raging ambition? Well, the Man in the Gray Flannel Suit wears Armani these days, but the songs and lighthearted satire are as sharp as ever. Matthew Broderick returns this week to the starring part in which he opened this production last spring, this time opposite his real-life girlfriend Sarah Jessica Parker as the girls-just-wanna-get-married secretary Rosemary. $25–$67.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Richard Rodgers Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 40 mins.*

Onstage

Business Practices of the Absurd

Since Kafka, hell's grimmest circles have been most memorably understood through the metaphor of the corporate office, represented as a faceless labyrinth that suffuses inhabitants with soul-stealing tedium while it labors toward ominous, vague, and threatening ends. (This, of course, does not apply to *your* office, which is doubtless swell.) It's easy to forget, though, that *grim* doesn't mean "humorless": Kafka friend and biographer Max Brod recalled the writer's reading his stories before an audience with tears of laughter streaming down his face. That's pretty much the perspective offered in *Below the Belt*, a darkish and perversely funny comedy by Richard Dresser opening Thursday at the John Houseman, in which Robert Sean Leonard (*Dead Poets Society, Arcadia*), Judd Hirsch, and Jude Ciccolella play businessmen going through the hyper-detailed motions of pinstriped intrigue in—nice touch, this—a nameless desert. Leonard and Hirsch had just finished other projects and were ready for a rest when they got the call, but claim they couldn't resist the script's bleakly wry charms. (Hirsch says it evokes the "wonderful dark plays" that thronged Off Broadway in the fifties and sixties before it evolved into a feeding ground for the commercial theater.) In contrast to the recent rash of plays that regard feral business practices from a more or less straightforward angle, *Below the Belt*, its principals emphasize, has less to do with realism than with metaphysical absurdity. "Basically, it's three guys in purgatory," says Leonard. "At one point, my character asks the other two, 'What do we make, anyway?' Their response is the key to the play: They just laugh."

RANDALL SHORT

Les Misérables—This pop-opera adaptation of the sprawling Victor Hugo novel, currently in its ninth year on Broadway, recently became the fourth-longest-running show in Broadway history. With a book by Alain Boublil and Claude-Michel Schonberg; music by the latter; lyrics by Herbert Kretzmer. $15–$67.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/12/87. *Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (239-6200). 3 hrs. 15 mins.*

Master Class—In the early seventies, opera star Maria Callas took her diva persona from stage to classroom with a celebrated series of tutorials for young hopefuls. Slightly fictionalized, they're the subject of Terrence McNally's newest play, starring Zoe Caldwell as the great *monstre sacrée* herself. $32.50–$50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. *Golden Theatre, 252 W. 45th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Miss Saigon—A reworking of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* set in Vietnam during the fall of Saigon. Score by Claude-Michel Schonberg; lyrics by Alain Boublil and Richard Maltby Jr.; directed by Nicholas Hytner. $15–$67.50. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2; dark Sun. Opened: 4/11/91. *Broadway Theater, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Molly Sweeney—Brian Friel's story of a woman blind from birth who, owing to the efforts of an ambitious ophthalmologist (Jason Robards) and a Micawberish husband (Alfred Molina), regains partial vision after 40 years but—feeling that an essential dimension of her personality has been lost in the process—ultimately chooses to revert to sightlessness. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. *Laura Pels Theater at the Roundabout, 1530 Broadway (869-8400).*

Moon Over Buffalo—In Ken (*Lend Me a Tenor*) Ludwig's new farce, Carol Burnett and Phillip Bosco play a husband-and-wife team of theatrical hams in no danger of being mistaken for Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne. (Lynn Redgrave and Robert Goulet are currently filling in for them for a seven-week period; Ms. Burnett and Mr. Bosco will be back on 4/17.) $40–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Martin Beck Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. (239-6200). 1 hr. 50 mins.*

The Phantom of the Opera—In its ninth year on Broadway, Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster continues to pack them in, passing the 3,200-performance mark recently and edging into sixth place among the longest-running musicals. And strangely—or wisely, depending on your point of view—it's no nearer to becoming a movie than on the day it opened. $15–$67.50. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. *Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Pomp, Duck & Circumstance—An "entertainment-and-dining extravaganza" imported from Berlin and performed in Salon Zazou, a thirties-vintage circus tent; actors sing, dance, juggle, clown, and otherwise disport themselves as you're eating a gourmet meal. $95–$150, tax and gratuity included; beverages charged separately. Tues.–Thurs.: Opens at 6, dinner and performance at 7:30. Fri.–Sat.: Opens at 6:30, dinner and performance at 8. Sun: Opens at 5:30, dinner and performance at 7. There's also a Sunday brunch performance at 1 with a special price of $50 for children twelve and under. Through 3/31. *DeWitt Clinton Park, Eleventh Ave. at 53rd St. (307-4100).*

Show Boat—Because it covers three generations of show folk, because its action spans four decades, because it shuttles between steamy Natchez and boreal Chicago, and because it touches on such varied subjects as race relations and the dispersal of families, *Show Boat* is usually described as having epic sweep. In a production such as this, certainly. There are problems with the plotting, but director Harold Prince's staging moves so swiftly and involvedly that there is no time for questions. He is seconded by choreographer Susan Stroman, who with this effort surges to the forefront of Broadway dance creators. This *Show Boat* is a dreamboat. (Simon; 10/17/94) $30–$75. Opened: 10/2/94. *Gershwin Theater, 222 W. 51st St. (307-4100). 3 hrs.*

Smokey Joe's Cafe: The Songs of Leiber and Stoller—They say the neon lights are bright on Broadway, and when this show—drawn from the score Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller composed to accompany the American baby-boomer childhood experience—breezes into New York City, people gonna scrape and bow. You don't like crazy music? (We keep forgettin'.) Don't feel that way; baby, that is rock and roll. A tip, tip, tip, young blood: Buy yourself a ticket, sit down in the very first row. Have a drink and dig the band. Can't you hear the flügelhorn? Can't you hear the bell? Come to them sickly, they'll make you well. We don't know why our heart flips (and, baby, we don't care); we only know it does. Heartbreakin' nights, only in America. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. $49.50–$67.50. At the *Virginia Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. (239-6200)?* Uh-huh. *2 hrs. 10 mins.*

Sunset Boulevard—"Patti LuPone's Norma Desmond was a tough gutter sparrow; Glenn Close's—close, but no cigar—a cross between the cigar-store Indian and a cathedral gargoyle. Now there is Betty Buckley, whose presence appears to have rewritten, recast, and redirected the entire show. With her trueness heightening everyone else's acting while giving us a Norma who will remain the norm, 10086 Sunset Boulevard becomes as important a number in musical annals as 1066 in English history—that of the Norma(n) Conquest." (Simon; 8/7/95.) $25–$70. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 11/17/94. *Minskoff Theatre, 200 W. 45th St. (307-4007). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Victor/Victoria—Reprising her title role in husband Blake Edwards's 1982 film, Julie Andrews—returning to the Broadway stage for the first time since the early sixties and *Camelot*—struts her stuff in (the late) Henry Mancini and Leslie Bricusse's musical adaptation of Mr. Edwards's comedy of sexual manners. "One way or another, *Victor/Victoria* will make history. Like a karaoke record, it's got everything minus one: a true star, a solid cast and ensemble, savvy staging and choreography, lush scenery and costumes and lighting, a funny (or at least doggedly farcical) book—everything but one really good song. This will be the test: Can a Broadway musical make it without a score? Still, *Victor/Victoria* may be the best unmusical musical you are ever going to see." (Simon; 11/6/95.) With Tony Roberts, Michael Nouri, and Rachel York; written and directed by Mr. Edwards. $20–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Marquis, 1535 Broadway (382-0100). 2 hrs. 45 mins.*

Photographs by Joan Marcus.

Off Broadway

Previews and Openings

Below the Belt—$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opening 3/14. *John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

Cowgirls—What happens when a classical-music trio gets booked by mistake into a country-music palace while the *actual* country-music trio races frantically to make the gig? About what you *A Night at the Opera* fans would imagine, probably. Mary Murfitt and Betsy Howie's new musical comedy of errors is directed by Eleanor Reissa. $29.50–$35 in previews, $29.50–$45 thereafter. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 7, Sat. at 10, Sun. at 3. Beginning previews 3/19 for a 4/1 opening. *Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta La. (420-8000).*

Hamletmachine—Five hundred years of Western civilization, as dissected by the German playwright Heiner Müller. $25. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2. Beginning performances 3/15; through 4/14. *Castillo Cultural Center, 500 Greenwich St. (941-5800).*

I Do! I Do!—After *The Fantasticks,* Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt will be best remembered in theatrical history for this musical adaptation of Jan de Hartog's play *The Fourposter,* which chronicles with rueful, knowing cleverness the ups and downs in the 50-year love affair of—surprise!—a married couple. Karen Ziemba (*Crazy For You*) and David Garrison star in the roles created on Broadway in 1966 by Mary Martin and Robert Preston. $35 in previews, $45 thereafter. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. Beginning previews 3/19 for a 3/28 opening. *Lambs Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Nixon's Nixon—After a successful run at MCC Theater last fall, Russell Lees's two-character play about a certain former ketchup-on-cottage-cheese-eating U.S. president and his national-security adviser has transferred uptown. $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Wed. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opening 3/12. *Westside Theater, 407 W. 43rd St. (315-2244).*

Sabina—Based on Aldo Carotenuto's book *A Secret Symmetry,* Willy Holtzman's new drama explores the breach engendered between psychoanalytic pioneers Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung by Sabina Spielrein, Jung's first analysand and later his lover. $33 Tues.–Thurs., $35 Fri–Sun. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opening 3/19. *Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. (333-4052).*

The Shattering—$25 during previews, $40 thereafter. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 3 and 7. Beginning previews 3/15 for a 4/1 opening. *Players Theatre, 115 MacDougal St. (239-6200).*

The Size of the World—A new family comedy by Charles Evered. $25–$35 in previews, $35–$45 after opening. In previews for a 3/20 opening. *Circle Repertory Theater Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. (239-6200).*

Take It Easy—A new musical that pays affectionate *hommage* to Hollywood's version of forties wartime romance. $18 in previews, $27.50 thereafter. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2, Sun. at 7. In previews for a 3/21 opening. *Judith Anderson Theatre, 422 W. 42nd St. (307-4100).*

Tartuffe—Molière's famous comedy, in Richard Wilbur's equally famous translation. $24; $19 seniors, $12 students. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Beginning performances 3/15 for a 3/17 opening; through 5/11. *Jean Cocteau Repertory, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. (677-0060).*

Working Title—The story of an unsuccessful screenwriter who, spending a weekend in the Hamptons awaiting a response to the first draft of his hoped-for breakthrough script on the Holocaust, uses the time to reflect on issues of marriage, career, and Jewishness. $30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2 and 7; no show 3/15, 21, 25–26, 4/3, 4. Opening 3/19. *American Jewish Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. (633-9797).*

Now Playing

After-Play—After a successful limited run at the Manhattan Theatre Club early last year, the actress Anne Meara's debut play about four old friends sharing a New York evening of dinner, theater, and memories is currently a few blocks west. $40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. *Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. (239-6200).*

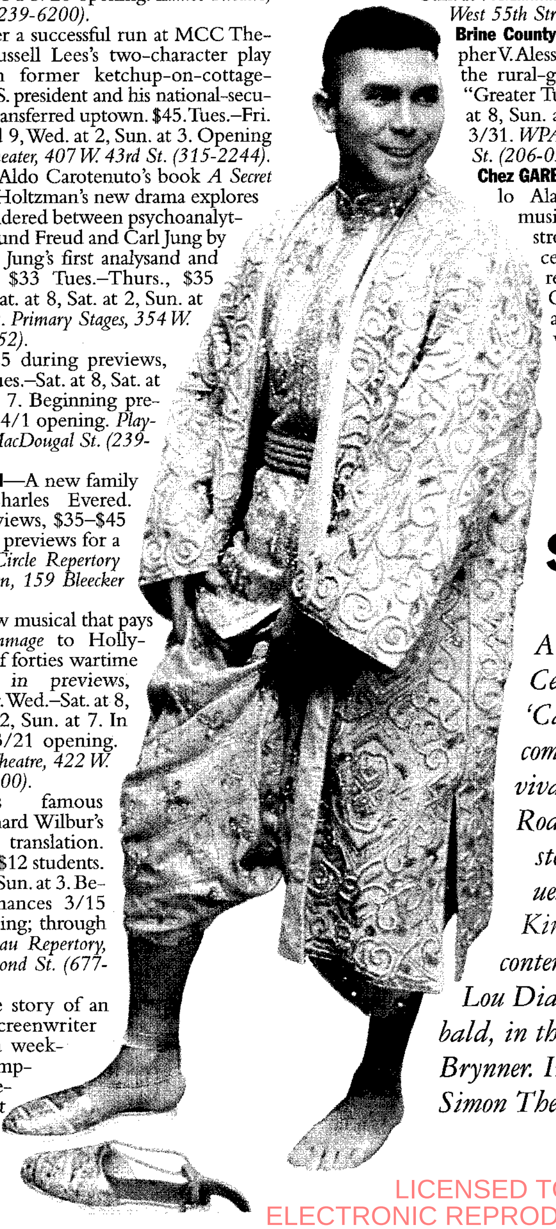
Bein' With Behan—Michael L. Kavanagh's one-man recreation of the life of Brendan Behan. $20. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. *Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (279-4200).*

Blue Man Group: Tubes—Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, etc. Kids love it, and adults can pretend the show's an ironic commentary on performance art. $35–$45. Tues., Wed., Thurs. at 8, Fri, and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. Opened: 11/17/91. *Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (254-4370).*

Blue Window—Craig Lucas (*Prelude to a Kiss*) bends language into intricate, Bachlike counterpoint by simultaneously following the inhabitants of five neighboring Manhattan apartments as they converge for a dinner party. Directed by Joe Mantello, whom you may recall as Louis from *Angels in America.* $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2:30, Sun. at 7. *Manhattan Theatre Club, 131 West 55th Street (581-1212).*

Brine County Wedding—Christopher V. Alessi's one-man show in the rural-goofball tradition of "Greater Tuna." $25. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. Through 3/31. *WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. (206-0523).*

Chez GARBO—In Michelangelo Alasa's environmental musical, the audience strolls through a conceptual artist's gallery recreation of Greta Garbo's East Side apartment—and, as well, through the last 50 years of the famous recluse's life. $20. Thurs.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7, Sun. at 3. *DUO Theatre, 62 E. 4th St. (598-4320).*



Previews
Shall We Dance?

Along with Lincoln Center's recent 'Carousel' and the upcoming Broadway revival of 'State Fair,' the Rodgers-and-Hammerstein renaissance continues apace with 'The King and I,' featuring contemporary heartthrob Lou Diamond Phillips, unbald, in the role created by Yul Brynner. In previews at the Neil Simon Theatre.

The Coyote Bleeds—A drama by Tony DiMurro about police misconduct. $22.50–$27.50. Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 5. *Worth Street Theater, 173 W. Broadway at Worth St. (279-4200).*

Dancing on Her Knees—Director/choreogapher Graciela Daniele and playwright Nilo Cruz have teamed up for this piece about two tango champions rediscovering their love in a dreamlike afterworld. $30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2, Sun. at 7. *LuEsther Hall, Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (260-2400).*

Double Identity—The Folksbiene Playhouse, which proudly bills itself as "the only remaining Yiddish Theatre in the United States," is honoring the 80th anniversary of Sholom Aleichem's death with a new, post-*Fiddler On The Roof* musical based on his stage comedy *Hard to Be a Jew.* It's performed in Yiddish, with simultaneous translation provided into English and—can there be any *doubt*?—Russian. $20–$25. Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2. *Folksbiene Playhouse, 123 E. 55th St. (755-2231).*

Entertaining Mr. Sloane—Joe Orton, having a high old time *epatering* the middle-class British bourgeoisie and their hypocritical (as far as the author's concerned, anyway) attitudes of cloistered morality. $25–$27; Quick Tix $15, students/seniors $10, high school students in grades 9-12 admitted on a pay-what-you-can basis. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 3/17. *Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. (677-4210).*

A Fair Country—The enduring subject of the young dramatist Jon Robin Baitz is a currently unfashionble one: the demands of what used to be called Conscience. In such dramas as *The Substance of Fire, Three Hotels,* and *The End of the Day,* Baitz has impressed critics and hypnotized audiences with a kind of modern morality play, featuring characters caught between a morass of compromising circumstances and their own elusive sense of what it means to Do The Right Thing. His latest script, based on a childhood experience, examines the private and public agonies of a family of American diplomats assigned to a nowhere posting in South Africa, including a man whose status as husband and father is corroded by a series of vicious, petty compromises as his Cassandra-like wife quietly (and sometimes not so quietly) goes mad. $37.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater at Lincoln Center, 150 W. 65th St. (239-6200).*

The Fantasticks—The musical perennial that, happily, refuses to go away. $35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 7, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 5/3/60. *Sullivan St. Theater, 181 Sullivan St. (674-3838).*

Floyd Collins—In the early days of America's transition from a paper-media culture to one based on film and radio, national attention was focused on individual horrors in a peculiarly grotesque manner. Adam Guettel and Tina Landau's new musical is taken from the real-life 1925 story of a farmer, trapped in a cavern, whose plight engenders the first modern media circus. $40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat.–Sun. at 3, Sun. at 7:30. *Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. (279-4200).*

The Food Chain—The playwright Nicky Silver (*Pterodactyls, Raised in Captivity*) is a young master of the theater's most challenging trick, often attempted and rarely successful: making audiences gasp in (moral) horror while simultaneously shrieking with laughter. (Aristotle thought this was impossible; shows you how much *he* knew.) His latest black farce, arriving here after a successful run in Washington last summer, concerns the import of obesity upon sex (straight, gay, and varied) and its attendant emotions. And a Jewish mother is thrown in—just, no doubt, to make sure the whole thing remains a comedy. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (307-4100).*

Forbidden Hollywood—Gerard Alessandrini, creator of the long-running, often updated *Forbidden Broadway,* has redirected his irreverently satirical gaze—best characterized as a wise-ass smirk with a leavening dollop of genuine affection—from stage to silver screen. Getting the whole *Water-*

world thing into a smallish cabaret setting with limited plumbing facilities will be a challenge, of course, but we have no doubt he'll work out *something.* $25 in previews, $35 thereafter. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 7:30, Sat. at 10:30, Sun. at 3. *The Triad, 158 W. 72nd St. (799-4599).*

Grandma Sylvia's Funeral—An audience-participation comedy akin to *Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding*, written by Glenn Wein and Amy Lord Blumsack. When Grandma Sylvia dies, a power struggle ensues among family members. $35–$55, which includes a mitzvah meal. Opened: 10/9/94. Wed. at 3, Wed.–Thurs. at 7:30, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9, Sun. at 1 and 5. *Soho Playhouse (formerly Playhouse on Vandam), 15 Vandam St. (691-1555).*

The Green Bird—A musical adaptation of Carlo Gozzi's mythic rite-of-passage drama. $10–$25. Thurs.–Sat. at 7, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6. *New Victory Theater, 209 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

In a Different Light—A one-man show based on the letters of Vincent Van Gogh. $15. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7. Through 3/31. *Playquest Theater, 4 E. 28th St. (779-0170).*

Lion in the Streets—Canadian playwright Judith Thompson's take on the contemporary urban nightmare, as seen from the ghostly/posthumous perspective of a young murder victim. $20. Thurs.–Sun. at 8. Through 3/17. *29th St. Repertory Theater, 212 W. 29th St. (465-0575).*

Mrs. Klein—The latest project of that fine actress and New York stage veteran Uta Hagen is Nicholas Wright's new play about the mysterious 1934 death of the son of early Freud disciple and psychotherapist Melanie Klein. With Amy Wright and Laila Robins; directed by William Carden. $40–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed at 2:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 6/2. *Lucille Lortel Theatre, 121 Christopher St. (239-6200).*

New Latino Voices—*Inkarri's Return, Forever in My Heart,* and *In the Land of Giants,* three Hispanic-themed plays presented in rotating repertory; call for detailed schedule. $15 for one show, $25 for two, $30 for all three. Thurs.–Sun. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 3/31. *Intar Theatre, 420 W. 42nd St. (279-4200).*

Overtime—In A.R. Gurney's comic sequel to *The Merchant of Venice,* the author of *Love Letters* and *The Dining Room* leaves his usual subject of dysfunctional northeastern Wasp gentility for something new: a comic fantasia that not only looks in on Shakespeare's Venetians just after the trial scene but transmutes them into a gumbo of contemporary, issue-driven ethnic characters including Jews, blacks, Latinos, and Irish-Americans. $30. Tues.–Sun at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. *Manhattan Theatre Club at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (581-1212).*

Party—Truth-or-dare high jinks are at the center of Chicago playwright David Dillon's comedy about seven gay men. Scene to watch for: a nude group tribute to Karen Carpenter. $40. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3 and 7. Through 3/24. *Douglas Fairbanks Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

Perfect Crime—Warren Manzi's long-running thriller about a wealthy psychiatrist accused of murdering her husband, and the small-town detective who tries to prove she committed the "perfect crime." $35. Mon. and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/5/87. *Duffy Theatre, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. (695-3401).*

Picasso at the Lapin Agile—Steve Martin's playwriting debut is about modern art, the Theory of Relativity, sleeping with girls, the creative process, *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon,* sleeping with girls, the romance of transcendental mathematics, sleeping with gi—well, many interesting beverages, and Elvis. $40–$45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. (239-6200).*

Rent—Hours after his newest production's first dress rehearsal, the talented young writer and composer Jonathan Larson died—suddenly, unexpectedly, and sadly—of a heart attack. The show—a reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as it might be lived by a gaggle of contemporary young and hip types living in the East Village—in the best theatrical tradition, goes on. $30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. *New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. (460-5475).*

Scenes From an Execution—The story of a fifteenth-century Venetian painter whose evocation of the Republic's warlike past enrages her Establishment patrons. $30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. *Atlantic Theater, 336 W. 20th St. (239-6200).*

Schoolhouse Rock Live!—A musical adaptation of the award-winning ABC–TV children's series. $20–$25. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 10, Sun. at 3. *Lamb's Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Sleep Deprivation Chamber—The Signature Theater Company's Adrienne Kennedy season continues with the world premiere of the playwright's latest script (written in collaboration with her son Adam), a story of upper-class blacks coming into contact for the first time with the rougher edges of the criminal-justice system. $20. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 3/24. *Susan Stein Theater at the Public, 425 Lafayette St. (260-2400).*

Opening

The Play's the (New) Thing

Literary scholar Charles Hamilton caused something of a sensation in 1993 when he identified a manuscript that had turned up in the bowels of the British Museum Library as *Cardenio,* a collaboration putatively between William Shakespeare and John Fletcher that had been known but lost for nearly 350 years. The script is receiving its New York premiere—costumes by Donna Karan, music by Dead Can Dance—this week at Musical Theatre Works' Linhart Theatre, 440 Lafayette Street (673-5375).

Spoke Man—NBC correspondent John Hockenberry's one-man show about life, and journalism, from the perspective of a wheelchair. $30. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. amd Sun. at 2:30. Through 3/24. *American Place Theatre, 111 W. 46th St. (239-6200).*

Stomp—As the title implies, a loud, aggressive, and energetic show in which a troupe of performers dance, clap, and generally bang on everything in sight. Featuring buckets, brooms, trash-can lids, and, yes, the kitchen sink. More engaging than you might expect. $29–$39.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 2/27/94. *Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., bet. 7th and 8th Sts. (307-4100).*

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding—A wedding at *St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St.,* then a reception at *147 Waverly Pl.,* with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. Wonderfully tacky—and it's lasted longer than a lot of real marriages. $60–$75. Tues.–Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 2. Opened: 2/6/88 (279-4200).

The Universe—Unlike Pascal, the unnamed protagonist of Richard Foreman's new stage piece isn't frightened by the eternal silence of those infinite spaces: After blinding himself to free his eyes from the pain of a woman too beautiful to bear, he finds himself speaking directly to—whoa—the cosmos at large. $15 Fri.–Sat.; $10 other performances. Tues., Thurs.–Sun. at 8. Through 3/31. *Ontological-Hysteric Theater, St. Mark's Church, 131 E. 10th St. (533-4650).*

Unto the Innocent—An absurdist comedy about Greenwich Village radicals, 1917 vintage. $25–$27.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3, Sun. at 7. Through 4/14. *Chernuchin Theatre, American Theatre of Actors, 314 W. 54th St. (307-7171).*

Virgins & Other Myths—Colin Martin's solo performance about a personal journey through stages of sexual innocence, New York hustling, and (whew) inner peace. $25. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 10:30, Sun. at 7. Through 3/31. *Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. (333-4052).*

Wasting Time With Harry Davidowitz—The story, pace its flippant title, of one Jewish man's spiritual journey from disbelief to renewal. $20. Sat. and Mon. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. *John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

The Winter's Tale—The (sort-of) comedy by Shakespeare. $21–$26. Tues., Thurs.–Fri. at 8, Wed. and Sun. at 2, Sat. at 5 and 9. Through 3/16. *Pearl Theatre, 80 St. Mark's Place (598-9802).*

Off-Off Broadway

Booby Hatch Jive—$10; on Thursdays 3/7 and 3/14, admission is on a pay-what-you-can basis. Wed.–Sat. at 8. Through 3/16. *Ground Floor Theatre Lab, 107 Suffolk St., bet. Rivington and Delancey Sts. (330-6884).*

Cardenio—$12. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Beginning performances 3/13 for a 3/17 opening. *Linheart Theatre, 440 Lafayette St. (673-5375).*

Catfish, Guns and Corndogs—$8, plus two-drink minimum. Mon. at 8. *Duplex, 61 Christopher St. (255-5438).*

The Club Champion's Widow—$10. Thurs.–Sun. at 8. Through 3/17. *Common Basis Theatre, 750 Eighth Ave., Room 500 (340-1112).*

The Ends of the Earth—$15/TDF. Wed.–Sat., Mon. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 3/24. *Theatre Row Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St. (886-1889).*

Freestyle Repertory Theatre—A rotating bill of four improvisational-comedy shows; call for detailed schedule. $15 Thurs.–Sun.; free Mondays. Mon., Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 10:30, Sun. at 3. Through 4/21. *John Houseman Studio Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (642-8202).*

Hamlet—Free. Thurs.–Sat. at 7:30, Sun. at 3. Through 3/31. *Theatre at West-Park Church, 165 W. 86th St. (496-4543).*

Haphazard—$10. Thurs.–Sun. at 8. Through 3/17. *Theater for the New City, 155 First Ave. (254-1109).*

Motherland—$15. 3/14–16, 21–23 at 8; 3/17 at 6. *Greenwich Street Theatre, 547 Greenwich St. (604-4222).*

The Odd Couple/The Mousetrap/California Suite—"Couple," Fri. at 8; "Mousetrap," Sat. at 8; "California," Sat. at 10. $15, plus two-drink minimum. Through 5/25. *Trocadero, 368 Bleecker St. (330-7607).*

Radio Free New York—Free. Fri. at 8. Through 3/15. *The Fort at Sidewalk Cafe, 94 Ave. A (718-832-8436).*

Rockland County No Vaudeville—$10. Thurs.–Sun. at 8. Through 3/31. *Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. (929-5285).*

Split Ends/. . . And She Cooks Too!/The Housekeeper—A mixed bill of three separate shows offering cabaret, murder mystery, and lighthearted comedy. $15 (groups over 20: $12), plus a two-drink minimum; all three shows, $30. Call for detailed schedule. *Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. (838-8528).*

The Corner Bar's My Lover Since You Ran Out on Me—Tues.–Sat. at 8. *HERE, 145 Sixth Ave. (769-7194).*

Two Cities—$12. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 3/24. *30th Street Theatre, 259 W. 30th St. (875-7772).*

Valhalla—$12/TDF. Thurs.–Sun. at 8. *Theater for the New City, 155 First Ave. (254-1109).*

Photograph by Andrew Greenspan.

in concert

Pollini...Oratorio Society...An Die Musik

Classical Music

Tuesday, March 12

New York Philharmonic—With percussionist Evelyn Glennie; Leonard Slatkin, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 7:30; $15–$60.*

Bella Davidovich, Pianist—Performs works by Schumann and Chopin. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $13–$60.*

New York Chamber Symphony— *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $15.*

Wednesday, March 13

Oratorio Society of New York—An all-Vivaldi program. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $15–$47.*

Camerata LatinoAmericana—Work influenced by Andean folklore, tango, and Caribbean dance. *Americas Society, 680 Park Ave. (935-6075), at 8; $25.*

Netherlands Chamber Orchestra—Performs works by Roussel and Saint-Saëns. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $20–$35.*

Voices of the Spirit—"Calls and Awakenings" with pianist Richard Goode, baritone William Sharp, and conductor John Harbison. *92nd St. Y, at Lexington Ave. (996-1100), at 8; $30.*

Thursday, March 14

Steve Reich Ensemble—Performs early work to benefit the Kitchen's twenty-fifth-anniversary season. *The Kitchen, 512 West 19th St. (255-5793), at 7:30; $500.*

New York Philharmonic— Mariss Jansons, guest conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $15–$60.*

Friday, March 15

New York Philharmonic—See 3/14, at 11.

Juilliard String Quartet—The fourth part of its season-long Beethoven cycle. *Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum of Art (570-3949), at 8; $20.*

New York Pops—Gilbert and Sullivan tribute; Skitch Henderson, music director. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $14–$65.*

Saturday, March 16

Hildegard Behrens, Soprano, and Christoph Eschenbach, Pianist—Perform works by Schumann, Berg, and Wagner. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $14–$65.*

New York Philharmonic—See 3/14.

Sunday, March 17

Emanuel Ax, Pianist—Performs works by Haydn, Fauré, and Lieberson. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (875-5050), at 2; $30.*

Leila Josefowicz, Violinist—Performs works by Beethoven, Bartók, and Strauss. *92nd St. Y, at Lexington Ave. (996-1100), at 3; $15.*

Maurizio Pollini, Pianist—Performs Beethoven's Sonatas 27, 28, and 29. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 3; $13–$60.*

Horacio Gutierrez, Pianist—Performs works by Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Beethoven. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 3; $18–$38.*

Performance

Dawn Awakens

The word *spiritual* has fallen on hard times, debased by New Agey overuse. But soprano Dawn Upshaw seeks a greater spiritual understanding of herself through the music she decides to perform. In three recitals at the 92nd Street Y, she publicly explores the "Voices of the Spirit." Known for her informality in recital, Upshaw isn't using this opportunity to play the diva. "I'm not really trying to preach or teach anything. I'm really doing this only for myself and for the people who are involved," she says. Upshaw conceived the program after hearing three pieces—Bach's Cantata BWV 199, Fauré's *La Chanson d'Eve,* and Harvey's *Song Offerings*—in close succession. Despite the stylistic differences, Upshaw felt the pieces related through their juxtaposition: "I had a strong desire to find a way to get to know these pieces. It dawned on me to put these together into some sort of program." And when the Y approached her about doing a recital series, she says, "it seemed like fate." The three pieces form the backbone of the series, starting with the Fauré in "Calls and Awakenings" on March 13, followed by the Bach in "Crises of Faith" on March 20 and, finally, the transcendent Harvey in "Epiphanies" on March 27. Working closely with conductor John Harbison, Upshaw has designed a musical *Pilgrim's Progress,* leading some of her favorite musicians through the paces. Constantly performing and learning new music, she says, has made it "more important that everything have a purpose and a meaning, that I'm not just repeating." ALEXANDRA LANGE

Ground Rules:

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public square/park performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, outdoors or in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

An Die Musik—This oboe, string trio, and piano ensemble performs works by Dave Brubeck and Beethoven. *Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330), at 4; $9.*

Paul Groves, Tenor—Performs works by Liszt, Debussy, and Schumann. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $25.*

Monday, March 11

Cleveland Orchestra—Christoph von Dohnányi, conductor. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $15–$70.*

California E.A.R. Unit—The world premiere of Virko Baley's *Dream Time. Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $15.*

Opera

Metropolitan Opera—Verdi's *La Forza del Destino,* 3/12 at 8, 3/16 at 1:30; Bizet's *Carmen,* 3/13 at 8, 3/16 at 8; Mozart's *Così fan tutte,* 3/14 at 8; Strauss's *Salome,* 3/15 at 8:30. *Metropolitan Opera, Lincoln Center (362-6000); $23–$175.*

New York City Opera—Puccini's *Tosca,* 3/13 at 8; Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier,* 3/14 at 8, 3/17 at 1:30; Verdi's *La Traviata,* 3/15 at 8; Puccini's *La Bohème,* 3/16 at 1:30; Verdi's *Attila,* 3/16 at 8. *New York State Theater, 20 Lincoln Center (870-5570); $17–$78.*

Amato Opera—Donizetti's *Don Pasquale.* 3/15 and 3/16 at 7:30. *Amato Opera Theater, 319 Bowery (228-8200); $18.*

Say It with Flowers—A chamber opera by Jeffrey Lependorf based on the play by Gertrude Stein. 3/16 at 3 and 8, 3/17 at 3. *Little Theater, Westside YMCA, 63rd St. at Central Park West (489-7938); $15–$17.*

Dance

Feld Ballets/NY—3/12–3/17 at 8, 3/17 at 4. Through 3/31. *Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. (242-0800); $30.*

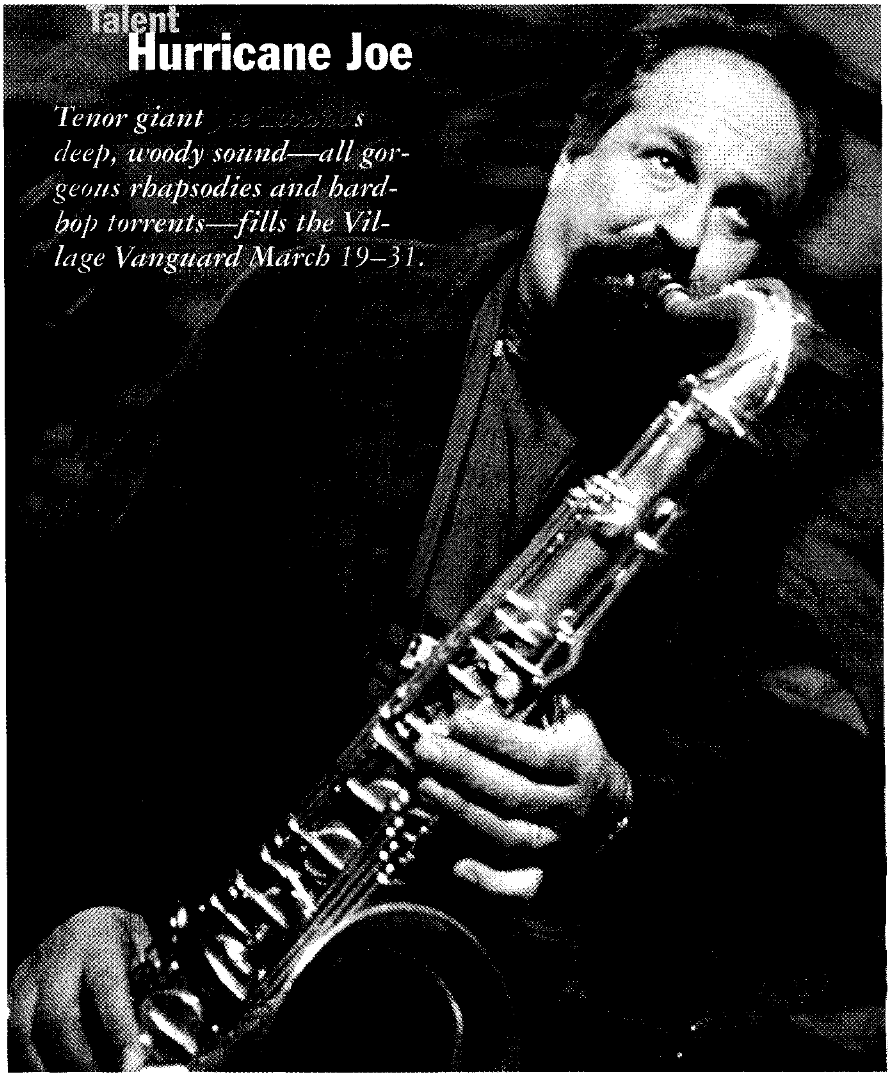
Klixbüll Dance Company—Performs the N.Y. premiere of WAVES. 3/14–3/17 at 8:30. *St. Mark's Church, 10th St. and Second Ave. (674-8194); $15.*

Shapiro & Smith Dance—The N.Y. premiere of *What Dark/Falling Into Light.* 3/13–3/16 at 8, 3/17 at 3. *Bessie Schönberg Theater, 219 W. 19th St. (924-0077); $12.*

Photograph by Stephanie Berger.

nightlife

Chieftains...Frank Black...Mongo Santamaria



Talent

Hurricane Joe

Tenor giant Joe Lovano's deep, woody sound—all gorgeous rhapsodies and hard-bop torrents—fills the Village Vanguard March 19–31.

Photograph by Guy Aroch/Blue Note Records.

Concerts

"Ellington: A New Take"—The explosive multi-saxophonist James Carter joins Jon Faddis and the Carnegie Hall Jazz Band in a program of updated Ellington arrangements. Since the Detroit native kicks up so much dust anyway—as an old-school shouter and super-smooth balladeer—he's sure to turn these Ellington tunes inside out. A highly recommended show. 3/14 at 8 P.M. *Carnegie Hall. 154 W. 57th St. (247-7800). $15–$55.*

Oasis—The Muhammad Ali of nineties rock, this band of British yobbos is actually fulfilling its once-extravagant claims to pop rulership. They came out swinging with a single that declared "I'm a rock'n'roll star," followed it with an album full of noisy hooks titled *Definitely Maybe*, and now, with the arena-ready grandiosity of songs like "Don't Look Back In Anger" and the ubiquitous "Wonderwall," are claiming the title. Textbook pop conquest, circa 1996. 3/13 at 8 P.M. *Paramount Theater at Madison Square Garden, 33rd St. between Seventh and Eighth Aves. Sold out.*

AC/DC—In today's bottom-line-oriented rock universe, AC/DC continues to get by in much the same way as the Ramones: flawless shtick, formulaic perfection, and a dependably brutal live show. The added bonus of a 37-year-old duckwalking guitarist in private-school cap, tie, and shorts doesn't hurt either. 3/15 at 7:30 P.M. *Madison Square Garden Arena, 33rd St. between Seventh and Eighth Aves. (307-7171). $25–$35.* 3/17 at 8 P.M. *Continental Airlines Arena (307-7171). $25–$35.*

Allman Brothers Band—Soldiering on for 27 years—through deaths, drug addiction, and disco—these kings of southern rock have a right to play the blues, which, in fact, they do very well. 3/12–3/13 and 3/15–3/16 at 8 P.M. *Beacon Theater, 2124 Broadway, at 74th St. (496-7070). $35.50.*

Tracy Chapman—3/20 at 8 P.M. *Beacon Theatre, 2124 Broadway, at 74th St. (307-7171) $25–$35.*

Hassan Hakmoun Ensemble—Ecstatic trance, dance, and romance from Morocco, with Radouane El Haress and Marrakech West and a Raï Dance Party. 3/16 at 8 P.M. *Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th. (307-7171). $25–$30.*

Dick Hyman and Friends—The jazz pianist joins forces with George Shearing for piano duets and solos. 3/16 at 8 p.m. *92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. (996-1100). $20.*

The Chieftains—3/17 at 8 P.M. *Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center, Broadway at 65th St. (721-6500). $20–$40.*

Life of Agony—3/22 at 7:30 P.M. *Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. (307-7171). $12.50.*

October Project—3/19 at 8 P.M. *Town Hall, 123 W. 23rd St. (840-2824). $26.*

Rod Stewart—Da ya think he's sexy? *Someone* must, since, at 51, this Scottish glam-stud is one of the only rock singers who dare take on Madison Square Garden "in the round," with full 360-degree exposure. 3/12 at 8 P.M. *Madison Square Garden Arena, 33rd St. between Seventh and Eighth Aves. (307-7171). $30–$75.*

A Night With Marianne Williamson—3/12 at 7:30 P.M. *Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (840–2824). $10.*

Clubland

Academy—Saint Patrick's Day eve gets a raucous send-off with New York's own hip-hoppified Irish rock band Black 47 on 3/16 Leaving its usual Second Avenue haunt at Paddy Reilly's for this big-time rock venue, the band might witness its first ever moshing to uilleann pipes. 3/18: Ziggy Marley. Shows at 8 P.M. *243 W. 43rd St., bet. Seventh and Eight Aves. (249-8870).*

Blarney Star—Expert Irish musicians congregate here every Friday, their instruments ranging from button accordion to uilleann pipes and their origins from the Bronx to County Clare. *43 Murray St., two blocks below Chambers St. (732-2873).*

Bottom Line—A top-notch venue—with great sound, good sight lines, and pretty decent fries—that recently celebrated its twentieth anniversary. Given to rock, jazz, and folk artists of all stripes. 3/14: Fabulous Thunderbirds. 3/15–3/16: Erstwhile Bruce Springsteen guitarist Nils Lofgren. *15 W. 4th St. (228-7880).*

Brownie's—Avenue A's divey post-college rock spot, with good tap beers, on-the-rise bands, and the occasional big name trying to keep a low profile. Cozy and congenial, even if you're not pierced. Shows nightly at 9.*169 Ave. A, at 11th St. (420-8392). $.*

CBGB & OMFUG—Ground zero of punk's stateside explosion and, twenty years later, still a smoking, flier-strewn pit—in a good way. Next door, CB's Gallery offers a more well-heeled atmosphere, with higher-end tap beers and quieter, if no less impassioned, acoustic acts. Shows nightly. *315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052). $.*

Chicago B.L.U.E.S.—A downtown blueserie, comfortably down-home, with living-room couches behind the stage. Dedicated to bringing us the best and brightest from the midwestern blues capital. *73 Eighth Ave., bet. 13th and 14th Sts. (924-9755). $.*

Coney Island High—St. Marks, not Coney Island, but still thrills and spills a plenty, with seedy out-

Ground Rules:

In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. $ = cash only.

er-borough ambience and bands picked by Jesse Malin, lead singer of local punk-preservationists D Generation. Every other Saturday night belongs to their famed trash-rock party, "Green Door NYC." 3/15: Walt Mink. *15 St. Marks Pl. (475-9726).*

The Cooler—The meat-packing district's subterranean steel-corridored home to alternative rockers, avant-garde-jazz musicians, and mind-expanding D.J.'s. A sleekly refurbished meat locker with black light, moody atmosphere, and a Patti Smith photo. 3/16: Groove Collective. Shows nightly. *416 W. 14th St. (229-0785).*

Fez—Mingus fever and lush *faux*-Moroccan ambience make this the neo-boho place to be on Thursdays, when the mighty Mingus Big Band rocks the house, playing the works of the great, brawling jazz bassist. 3/12: Jeffrey Gaines. 3/15–3/16: "Highlights of past Loser's Lounge nights" featuring the Kustard Kings and Chloe and Nick Danger. *Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (533-2680).*

Irving Plaza—Led by the dashing redhead Jim Thirlwell, Foetus, New York's heroes of lurid existential industrial rock, plays 3/12, with local indie-rock supergroup Chavez, Elysian Fields, and the Morning Glories. 3/13: L.A.'s brutal, boorish, and very fun hardcore punk heroes Fear hold forth, led by the mean, bullet-headed, thick-necked Tom Jones of punk, Lee Ving. 3/14: Seven Mary Three; Poe. *17 Irving Pl. (777-6800).*

Knitting Factory—The Disneyland of downtown music, with three floors, two stages, two microbrew-bearing bars and some of the biggest names in now music. 3/15: William Hooker Orchestra Project. 3/18: David Murray Big Band. 3/19: Spanish Fly. 3/20: Jazz Mandolin Project. *74 Broadway, bet. Leonard and Church. (219-3055).*

Manny's Car Wash—A little Chicago on the Upper East Side. Mondays, beware salivating yuppie swells here for Ladies Night. 3/12: Memphis Pilgrims with Michael Falzarano and Harvey Sorgen of Hot Tuna. 3/20: The 11-year-old blues harmonica genius Brody Buster. *1558 Third Ave. (369-BLUE).*

Maxwell's—Hoboken's indie-rock central or CBGB West, the site of many of rock's recent groundswells. 3/15: Indie-roots-rockers Walt Mink share the night with Brain Surgeons, led by the ever-rockin' husband-and-wife team of Blue Öyster Cult drummer Albert Bouchard and rock critic Deborah Frost. *1039 Washington St., Hoboken (201-798-4064).*

Mercury Lounge—Thursdays through May, Johns Flansberg and Linnell—the George and Ira Gershwin of manic, melodic quirk-rock—put their delightful band They Might Be Giants through its paces. *217 E. Houston St. (260-4700).*

Sidewalk Cafe—The back-room Fort is the latest home to New York's "anti-folk" scene, featuring impassioned, oft-wacky guitar- and poesy-wielding artists, with the occasional Beat refugee. *94 Ave. A. (473-7373).*

Sounds of Brazil—The city's premier world-music venue, presenting many acts that could fill stadia back home. 3/12: "Latin Soul Sessions" with Joe Cuba; Frankie Jackson's "Soul Kitchen." 3/15: Philippe Saisse; Zin. 3/16: Samba Novo. 3/18: *Conguero* legend Mongo Santamaria; Pucho and his Latin Soul Brothers. 3/19: Frankie Jackson's "Soul Kitchen." *204 Varick St. (243-4940)*

Tramps—3/14: Greyboy All-Stars featuring Fred Wesley. 3/16: Alt-rock's eccentric uncle Frank Black has gone from leading one of the most influential bands of the post-punk era, Boston's Pixies, to something of a dark and distorted Brian Wilson, living in Chandler's L.A. and crafting insinuating art-rock numbers and deadpan social commentary. Fave kiss-off to "alternative"-come-lately's: "My name's Chip. And I'm different." Black plays songs from his latest, *Cult of Ray,* with the like-minded L.A. solo artist Jonny Polonsky, a sort of synthesizer-powered Jonathan Richman, and Reid Paley. *51 W. 21st St. (727-7788).*

Wetlands—A groovy club-kid/activist hang with neo-hippie atmosphere and far-flung musical guests. N.B.: Tuesday night is (Grateful) Dead Night. 3/17: Ska with Scofflaws, Pietasters, Slackers, and others. *161 Hudson St. (966-5244).*

Jazz

Birdland—A comfy, two-tiered restaurant with huge bay windows, late-fifties jazz paintings, and striking light fixtures hovering from the ceiling. An uptown jazz outpost, with excellent jazz musicians that play nightly. *2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228).*

Blue Note—Easily the city's highest-ticket jazz spot, the self-titled "jazz capital of the world" often presents two top-flight artists in one evening and, as its empire expands (soon to take Korea with Blue Note Seoul), charges accordingly. 3/12–3/17: McCoy Tyner Trio with Michael Brecker; Diana Krall Trio. 3/19–3/24: Zawinul Syndicate; Mike Stern Trio. Sets at 9 and 11:30. *131 W. 3rd St. (475-8592).*

Bradley's—Jazz's secret garden and, at 25 years, second only to the Village Vanguard for longevity. It's an intimate, dark-paneled restaurant into which some of the city's best jazz musicians creep after hours. Through 3/16: Percussionist Leon Parker with vibraphonist Steve Wilson, Bruce Barth, and Larry Grenadier. 3/17: George Cables, Santi Denriano, and Winard Harper. Sets at 10, midnight, and 2 A.M. *70 University Pl., at 11th St. (473-9700).*

Cornelia Street Cafe—A cozy and well-heeled neighborhood restaurant that, occasionally, presents excellent jazz musicians. 3/13: Rogerio Botte Maio Quartet. 3/15: Vared Derkel Quintet. 3/16: Philip Hamilton. *29 Cornelia St. (989-9317).*

The Five Spot—Highly rated food and the airy, drop-dead splendor of the old Hotel Wolcott's ballroom. 3/15–3/16: Benny Powell Quartet featuring Ronnie Matthews Earl May, Vinnie Johnson, Talib Kibwe. *7 W. 31st St. (631-0100).*

Iridium Room—The artfully wacky restaurant across from Lincoln Center crosses Dali with Dr. Seuss in its décor and hosts some formidable jazz comers in its basement. 3/12–3/17: Stanley Turrentine, Mr. T to his friends, lays out some of the warmest, fattest tenor saxophone this side of Kansas City. The swinging hard-bop and soul-jazz stalwart leads a quintet here 3/12–3/17. 3/19–3/24: Pat Martino Quartet. Sets at 8:30 and 10:30, Sun.–Thurs., with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. *44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (582-2121).*

Knickerbocker Bar & Grill—A wood-paneled and brass-railed restaurant with Old New York ambience and excellent—occasionally legendary—pianists. *33 University Pl. (228-8490).*

Small's—A newish, feisty jazz club that stays open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a cozy, candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post-Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. Thurs.–Sun., shows start at 10. *183 W. 10th St. (929-7565). $*

Sweet Basil—An intimate downtown restaurant with good food and high-profile jazz acts. Every Sunday, Doc Cheatham plays from 2 to 6. 3/19–3/24: Ray Anderson's Alligatory Band. Sets at 9 and 11, with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. *.88 Seventh Ave. So., at Bleecker St. (242-1785).*

Tavern on the Green—A somewhat overwrought restaurant in a touristy Central Park rest stop, the Tavern's Chestnut Room is still a top-flight jazz club—with excellent sound and a full roster of stars. 3/12–3/17: K. T. Sullivan. 3/19–3/24: Marilyn Volpe. Wednesday nights, the cover's a scant five bucks. *Central Park at W. 67th St. (873-3200).*

Village Vanguard—Piano giant Tommy Flanagan leads a telepathic trio with Kenny Washington and Lewis Nash, 3/12–3/17. 3/19–3/31: March goes out like a lion as the mighty tenor saxophonist Joe Lovano leads two different pianoless quartets. Recreating his smashing new double-CD, *Quartets: Live at the Village Vanguard,* this consummate musician leads two foursomes of stellar players, each with a different focus. On 3/19–3/24, pianist Mulgrew Miller, bassist Christian McBride, and drummer Lewis Nash help Lovano bear down into hard-swinging, muscular grooves and classics by Coltrane, Monk, Mingus, and others. On 3/26–3/31, the quartet includes trumpeter Tom Harrell, bassist Anthony Cox, and Nash, concentrating on Lovano's own free-flowing compositions and electric exchanges with his bandmates. Sets at 9:30 and 11:30 P.M.and 1 A.M. *178 Seventh Ave. So., at W. 11th St. (255-4037). $.*

Visiones—Spanish food and avant-ish jazz guests, along with some funkified post-boppers. 3/12: Drummer and avant-jazz leader extraordinaire Bobby Previte. 3/13–16: Ray Drummond Quar-

Talent

Hail to the Chieftains

Onstage, they seem less like global music stars than profs at a faculty Christmas party. Tin whistler Paddy Moloney toasts guests and cracks wise, pianist-harpist Derek Bell mugs about like the lovable, possibly sozzled, classics lecturer, and bald-pated violinist Martin Fay stares down the proceedings like the dour but indulgent dean. Once the Chieftains start playing, though, looks quickly prove deceiving. The passion and breathtaking virtuosity they bring to such traditional Celtic instruments as Uilleann pipes and bodhrans make them sorcerors of ancient music, summoning a rare and trembling beauty that's unmatched in contemporary music. In fact, they just beat out Boyz II Men for a Grammy (Best Pop Collaboration With Vocals, for a song with Van Morrison). So it's not for nothing that this 32-year-old band was named Ireland's official musical ambassador in 1989 or that last year's *The Long Black Veil* featured such admiring sidefolk as Sting, Mick Jagger, and Sinead O'Connor. As most of the world knows, the Chieftains are *monster* musicians, and there's no better place to be on Saint Patrick's Day than Avery Fisher Hall, where they'll toast Ireland's savior in style. Odds are, they'll have some new jokes and toasts prepared especially for the occasion.

CHRIS NORRIS

Photograph by Guy Aroch/Blue Note Records.

tet, featuring Billy Hart. 3/19: Lynn Arriale Trio. 3/20–3/23: James Williams' "Intensive Care Unit." Pierce. Sets at 9 and 11, with extra show Fri. and Sat. at 1 A.M. *125 Macdougal St. (673-5576).*

Comedy

Caroline's Comedy Club—In Times Square just down the street from the *Letterman* show. 3/13: Salsoul Comedy Troupe; All-Star Comedy Showcase. 3/14–3/17: Brian Regan with Greg Fitzsimmons. 3/20: Hot 97's Phat Comedy. 3/21–3/24: Robert Schimmel with Lizz Winstead and Eddie Brill. 3/18–3/19: New Talent Night hosted by Eddie Brill. *1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (757-4100).*

Comedy Cellar—A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city's top comics. 3/18–3/24: Jeff Ross; Gregg Rogell; Ray Romano; Greg Giraldo; Dave Attell. Shows Sun.–Thurs., 9–2. *117 MacDougal St. (254-3480).*

Comic Strip—Probably the most expertly booked club in the city, this showcase offers an eclectic mix of comedians every night of the week. *1568 Second Ave., bet. 81st and 82nd Sts. (861-9386).*

Dangerfield's—Founded by the respect-deprived comedian two decades ago, this Vegas-style lounge is one of the city's oldest comedy establishments. Through 3/17: Gregory Carey; Brian McFadden; Gabe Abelson; Ben Creed; Mike Robles; Quentin Heggs. 3/18–3/24: Jim Gaffigan; Rich Ramirez; Nancy Redman; Billy Jaye; Brian McFadden; Ben Creed. *1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (593-1650).*

Luna Lounge—Mondays, it's The Show Formerly Known As Rebar. Shows at 8. *171 Ludlow St., at Houston. (260-2323).*

New York Comedy Club—Every Friday, the NYCC presents "New York's Best African-American and Latino comics." Every Wed. and Thurs., there's sketch comedy at 7 P.M. Shows Mon.–Fri. at 9, with extra shows Fri. at 7 and 11; Sat. at 6, 7:30, 9:30, and 11:45. *241 E. 24th St. (696-5233).*

Stand-up New York—Robin Williams is known to drop by here unannounced to warm up for his *Letterman* appearances. 3/15–3/17: Joe Mulligan; Kevin Brennan; Greg Carey; Greg Fitzsimmons. Sun.–Thurs. at 9; Fri. at 9 and 11:30; Sat. at 7:30, 9:30, and 11:30. *236 W. 78th St. (595-0850).*

Cabaret

Algonquin Hotel—Through 4/6: Julie Wilson. Tues.–Sat. at 9 (dinner at 7); Fri.–Sat. also at 11:30 (supper at 10:30). $30; $15 minimum. Sundays in March, at 9:30 (dinner at 7:30): Lynda Jamison. $50 dinner and show, or $20 music charge plus $15 minimum. *59 W. 44th St. (840-6800).*

Arcimboldo—On Sunday evenings, this stylish trattoria in the U.N. neighborhood offers "Opera With Taste," a series of programs featuring selected arias performed by a rotating ensemble of up-and-coming young stars from the Metropolitan Opera, at 7 and 8:30. The prix-fixe dinner menu (seatings at 6:15 and 7:45) is $40; no music charge. *220 E. 46th St. (972-4646).*

Asti—Singing-waiter frolics with an emphasis on opera and operetta (frequently shoulder to shoulder *and* bolder and bolder) are the keynote of this Village landmark. No music charge. *13 E. 12th St. (741-9105).*

Bemelmans Bar—Pianist and singer Peter Mintun is back for a return engagement here through 5/4. Tuesdays through Saturdays from 9:30 to 1:30. $10 music charge; no minimum. *Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600).*

Cafe Carlyle—Through 3/16: Dixie Carter. Tues.–Sat. at 8:45 and 10:45. $45 cover, no minimum. *Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600).*

Cafe Pierre—Dancing on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings from 9 to 1, backed up by the romantic stylings of singer-pianist Kathleen Landis and her trio. $10; jacket and tie required. *2 E. 61st St. (940-8185).*

Performance

They Might Be Regulars

Twelve years into it, Johns Flansburgh (left) and Linnell (right) are keeping their high-yield Brooklyn-based quirk-pop outfit They Might Be Giants in full swing. Thursdays through March, they take over the Mercury Lounge, honing their wits and accordion chops for a follow-up to their last rock opus, *John Henry*.

Claire—Jazz vocalist David Downing. Thurs. and Sun. at 9, Fri. and Sat. at 9:30, Sun. at 1. No cover, no minimum. *156 Seventh Ave. (255-1955).*

F. illi Ponte—Pianist-singer David Raleigh rocking the room at the newly renamed BeCa (Below Canal) Bar with his group, the Little Big Band. Wed.–Sat. from 8 to 1. No cover, no minimum. *39 Debrosses St. (226-4621).*

Ibis—This Mediteranean-flavored supper club, popular in the early eighties, has recently reopened with a variety show incorporating song, dance, magic acts, and—what else?—belly dancing. Tues.–Sat. at 8:30, Sun. at 8. Dinner and performance, $45. Performance only: $15 with a $20 minimum Tues.–Thurs., $20 with a $20 minimum Fri.–Sat. *327 W. 44th St. (262-1111).*

Michael's Pub—As always, Woody Allen and the New Orleans Funeral & Ragtime Orchestra on Mon. at 8:45 and 11. $35 minimum. *211 E. 55th St. (758-2272).*

Rainbow and Stars—Linda Lavin (TV's "Alice"), who arrived at showbiz stardom with a featured role in Charles Strouse's 1966 musical *It's a Bird, It's a Plane, It's Superman*, is currently expressing her appreciation for the favor—as well as covering some of the most witty tunefulness in Broadway history—in "A Lot of Living!," a new cabaret show featuring Mr. Strouse's songs. Through 3/30. $40 cover. Tues.–Sat. at 8:30 and 11; dinner required at early shows. On Sunday evenings in March at 7:30 and 10, the room's also taking over as host to the special ASCAP series that's been a prominent feature for the past several years at the Russian Tea Room, featuring various cabaret luminaries for one-night-only engagements. The roster this time includes Liz Callaway and Ann Hampton Callaway (3/10); Sara Zahn (3/17); Sharon McNight (3/24); and Laurie Beechman (3/31). $20 cover, with a $15 food/drink minumum; special prix-fixe dinner, $30. *30 Rockefeller Plaza, 65th floor (632-5000).*

Bars

Bar 5757—At the Four Seasons Hotel. This swank mausoleum has thirteen different martinis on its menu. Included among the various fruity mutations is the James Bond Original—yes, you guessed it: "shaken, not stirred." *57 E. 57th St. (758-5700).*

Bar d'O—An elegant and secluded bar on a lost corner in Greenwich Village. Perfect for a rendezvous (whatever your preference). Be sure to catch Joey Arias's delinquent and daring drag show, every Tuesday night. *29 Bedford St., at Downing St. (627-1580).*

Beauty Bar—Another concept bar from the people who brought you No Tell Motel and Babyland. "Beauty parlor"—which the space was quite recently—is the theme and trendy are the clientele, most preferring pierces and home dye jobs to the store-bought variety. (Don't ask for red wine, it's a henna.) *231 E. 14th St., at Second Ave. (539-1389).*

Beekman Bar and Books—A determinedly upscale lounge for men and the women who will marry them. The clientele is much younger than it pretends to be and is very serious about being civilized. Very serious. Very civilized. Expect cigar and whiskey know-it-alls; expect striped ties and strings of pearls. *889 First Ave., nr. 50th St. (980-9314).*

bOb—A house party in some out-of-town aunt's living room. A tribute to the city's night-crawling diversity—fashion divettes, funksters, losers, and hippie girls. Fat-lady mud wrestling on the televisions above the exit and the bar keeps the traffic at these vital transaction points light. *235 Eldridge St., at Houston St.*

Bowery Bar—Eric Goode's controversial wall boxes out the neighborhood and contains the giddy hipsters within a very cool lounge inspired by a fifties-era Miami Holiday Inn. So happy for a new place to have a genius time, the crowd doesn't seem to mind a bartender in whom a request for a neat bourbon inspires paroxysms of self-doubt. *358 Bowery, at 4th St. (475-2220).*

Brooklyn Inn—The arty and underemployed bang elbows with Brooklyn Law School cutups in this raucous cattle car. The self-consciously cool jukebox is equal parts Tom Waits, the Pogues, and John Coltrane. Pints of Guinness and Schaeffer and everything in between. *Bergen St. at Hoyt St., Brooklyn (no phone).*

Den of Thieves—Another thumping downtown concept bar. Comfortable banquettes and some down-on-your-luck linoleum deuces so the regulars can commiserate about how hard it is to be young and fabulous all the time. Gripping rhythm from the D.J. after 11. *145 E. Houston St. (477-5005).*

J. J. Beckett's—With the exception of the occasional overenthusiastic undergrad, most of the folks at the bar look as though they deserve a drink. On Wednesday nights, this Naugahyde-and-pressboard dive hosts the James Begian Three, an earnest, low-key trio that lends plenty of atmosphere. Finally, a destination bar on the Upper West Side that's not a pathetically phony friends-in-low-places theme bar. *Amsterdam Ave., at 90th St. (787-9628).*

The Rainbow Promenade—Head bartender Dale Degroff has been creating cocktails and perfecting the classics for years, and nothing beats the view at sunset. The line starts on Thursday and lasts all weekend, so drop by early in the week. *30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5100).*

Photograph by Frank Ockenfels.

restaurants

ABC Café...SoHo Soul...Chickpea Salmon

KODAK EPL 6075
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Opening
Sweet Carolina

At his plantation-shuttered restaurant Sweet Ophelia's (430 Broome Street), owner and erstwhile opera singer Alexander Smalls offers a more affordable version of the "low country" Carolina cooking he introduced at Cafe Beulah. The bakery's luscious sage-sausage biscuits, banana-pudding pie, and sweet-potato muffins are all available to go.

Manhattan

Lower New York

Alison on Dominick—An impeccably turned-out room with blue banquettes and tender lighting. Perfectionist owner Alison Becker Hurt makes sure that all is well. *38 Dominick St., nr. Hudson St. (727-1188). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

American Renaissance—The dining room of Eric Blauberg's grand restaurant in the American Thread Building looks like the monastery of the order of Saint Liberace. Chef Blauberg uses very of-the-moment infusions to create some of the freshest and most carefully prepared food in town. *260 W. Broadway, two blocks south of Canal St. (343-0049). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Baluchi's—Indian fare served in a cozy, comfortable atmosphere in the center of SoHo. Have a seat on a patchwork chair amid fantastic imported treasures. *193 Spring St., bet. Thompson and Sullivan Sts. (226-2828). Also, 1565 Second Ave., nr. 81st St. (288-4810). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Bo Ky—This very basic Chinatown spot has been dishing up delicious noodle soups to the neighborhood since before the Mees and Tang Tangs sprouted uptown. Expect to share a table. *80 Bayard St. (406-2292). (I) ($).*

Bouley—Born to French parents and raised on his grandparents' farm in Connecticut, David Bouley knows the basics of classic French cooking, but he's given them his own signature style. Reserve weeks in advance, especially for Friday or Saturday night. There's a prix fixe at lunch and a six-course degustation at dinner. *165 Duane St., nr. Hudson St. (608-3852). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Chanterelle—Spare and elegant, virtually religious, this TriBeCa restaurant is a favorite among those who want a Big Deal. Chef David Waltuck runs a grand kitchen—seafood sausage, cold fruit soups, and anything he does with truffles in season. Wife Karen runs the front room with class and warmth. *2 Harrison St., at Hudson St. (966-6960). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Félix—Parisian bistro conveniently situated on SoHo's version of the Champs-Élysées, serving escargot and other Gallic standards. The atmosphere, as in most territory south of Houston, is stylishly casual. *340 W. Broadway (431-0021). (M) AE.*

Hudson River Club—From this Frank Lloyd Wright–ish dining room in the World Financial Center, you can see the Statue of Liberty. But then, the Hudson River figures prominently so many ways here. Chef Waldy Malouf uses farmers and their produce from along the Hudson River valley to reinvent traditional American fare. *4 World Financial Center (786-1500). (E) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Kelley and Ping—The type of funky, lofty noodle house that could only exist—and thrive—in SoHo. *127 Greene St., nr. Prince St. (228-1212). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

L'Ecole—This modern French bistro is unique in that its chefs are students from the French Culinary Institute. Special three- and five-course menus are available, so come with either an empty stomach or a doggie bag. Private parties. Closed Sundays. *462 Broadway, at Grand St. (219-3300). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Le Pescadou—This innovative Provençal bistro serves fresh seafood enhanced by a variety of infused oils. Oyster fans will find a wide variety of fresh ones. *18 King St., at Sixth Ave. (924-3434). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Montrachet—Owner Drew Nieporent now has five places in New York, including Nobu, Layla, TriBeCa Grill, and Tribeca Grill, and another in San Francisco. But this is his baby—attractive, lively, and one of the first truly great restaurants in lower Manhattan. There's lunch on Fridays—try the Roquefort-and-pear salad—and dinner Monday through Saturday. *239 W. Broadway, nr. White St. (219-2777). (E) AE only.*

Nacho Mama's Brewery—A lofty new brewery in SoHo serving microbrewed beer and the kind of food, from chicken wings to gourmet burritos, that goes with it. The scene is as young and lively as would be expected. *40–42 Thompson St., at Broome St. (925-8966). (I) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Nick and Eddie—If every neighborhood had a corner comfort-food port like this one, most of us would never leave. So we travel to this muted room with the other strivers, hustlers, strictly business types, and family-night-outers who flock to feel like part of the woodwork. *203 Spring St., at Sullivan St. (219-9090). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Nobu—The great Nobu Matsuhisa—actually, he's young, good-looking, and incredibly hip—has arrived in TriBeCa. And New Yorkers haven't tasted Japanese cooking like this—unless, of course, they've visited Matsuhisa's restaurant in L.A. *105 Hudson St. (219-0500). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Odeon—Downtown has fallen in love all over again with this TriBeCa institution. The bar's out of Dashiell Hammett, and the dining room gets everyone from the banker, his wife, and their 2-year-old to movie stars, artists, and assorted big-deal celebrities. *145 W. Broadway, nr. Thomas St. (233-0507). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Raoul's—The dull roar in this cavelike bistro—aging gracefully amid the high-strung Thoroughbreds of SoHo's restaurant racetrack—is a heartwarming sound. *180 Prince St., nr. Thompson St. (966-3518). (M) AE, MC, V.*

SoHo Kitchen and Bar—Grape nuts celebrate the 96-spigot Cruvinet, ordering flights of Cabernets or seven Pinot Noirs to taste and compare, but SoHo neighbors love it, too—for all those beers on tap, for the thin-crust pizza, for a glance at the game on the TV overhead. *103 Greene Street., nr. Prince St. (925-1866). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Tennessee Mountain—An 1807 landmark farmhouse, this BBQ joint serves up chicken and ribs that you're not likely to forget. Bring those breath

Ground Rules:

Here lie a few hundred of the city's more noteworthy restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive, $35 and over per place; (M) = moderate, $15–$30 per place; (I) = inexpensive, $15 and under per place.

Following each listing there is also a code indicating acceptable methods of payment: ($) = cash only, AE = American Express, CB = Carte Blanche, DC = Diners Club, DS = Discover, M = MasterCard, TM = Transmedia, V = Visa. "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted charge/credit card.

Photograph by Steffen Thalemann.

mints and Handi-Wipes for all-you-can-eat on Monday night. *143 Spring St. (431-3993). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Tribeca Grill—Though this spacious, brick-walled restaurant sometimes serves as canteen for the film execs (and movie stars) in offices upstairs, the creative American cuisine and lively bar scene make it a popular downtown destination. Known for its roasted meats and fish specials. *375 Greenwich St., at Franklin St. (941-3900). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Zoë—Charmingly hosted, megadesigned, and packed at lunch. Exceptional American wine list and an eclectic menu featuring contemporary American dishes like crispy calamari with Vietnamese dipping sauce, wood-grilled Angus sirloin with basil mashed potatoes and bourbon sauce, and German chocolate cake with banana ice cream. *90 Prince St. (966-6722). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Below 14th Street, East

Casanis—A shrine to French barroom bric-a-brac in the basement. A bistro that is as Paris was in the sixties. Yes, that was Jean-Paul Belmondo. *54 E. 1st St. (777-1589). (M) ($).*

Gotham Bar & Grill—Alfred Portale's kitchen, with its architectural ingenuity and whimsical creativity, serves as a finishing school for the city's all-star chefs before they launch their own careers. This awesome dining temple has long been a staple. *12 E. 12th St. (620-4020). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Haveli—Haveli distinguishes itself from the Sixth Street strip, for its food as much as its upscale decor. Possibly the only East Village restaurant with an *intentionally* shattered windowpane. *100 Second Ave., nr. 6th St. (982-0533). (I–M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Miracle Grill—This is what Bobby Flay did before Mesa Grill, and some regulars still prefer the low-key, casual atmosphere and the lively garden out back. The grilled vegetable plate surpasses most. *112 First Ave., nr. 7th St. (254-2353). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Three of Cups—Proving that the East Village has room enough for another wood-burning oven pizza parlor besides Two Boots. The "mickey," a charred spud dripping with butter, shouldn't be missed. *83 First Ave., at 5th St. (388-0059). (I) AE, MC, V.*

Below 14th Street, West

Andalousia—This relatively undiscovered Village Moroccan can rightly prides itself on its roster of tagines and couscous specials. B'stilla is a standout. *28 Cornelia St. (929-3693). (I) MC, V.*

Bar Pitti—This Tuscan trattoria, with tables spilling out onto the sidewalk, has simpler, cheaper food than Da Silvano next door, but it's just as good a spot to sip an espresso and watch the Village foot traffic. Great fettunta. *268 Sixth Ave., nr. Bleecker St. (982-3300). (I–M) ($).*

Da Silvano—Trattoria with tables out front converts this thoroughfare into a people promenade. Great food and views of the local color. Yes, that was Anna Wintour. *260 Sixth Ave., nr. Bleecker St. (982-2343). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Greenwich Cafe—Open around the clock with a menu that crosses every border. Try the veal couscous and the Mediterranean antipasto plate. *75 Greenwich Ave. (255-5489). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Le Zoo—The newest West Village scene, with lots of Left Bank ambience. The menu sticks to standards like poulet grand mère, saumon en croute, and cassolette. *314 W. 11th St. (620-0393). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Rincon de España—Spanish restaurant offering excellent paella and seafood; very small and intimate. *226 Thompson St. (475-9891/260). (I) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Rose Cafe—This quiet and casual American bistro draws a diverse crowd. One of the only places where you can go and sit on Fifth Avenue and not break the bank. *24 Fifth Ave., at 9th St. (260-4118). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Tio Pepe—A reliably festive spot for classic Mexican and Spanish fare, from tapas to paella Valenciana, with an enclosed sidewalk café and skylit garden room. *168 W. 4th St. (242-9338). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Villa Mosconi—Peter Mosconi and his brood offer a menu as reliable as traditional Italian home cooking. Find this old-world anachronism in the heart of Greenwich Village. *69 MacDougal St. (673-0390). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Ye Waverly Inn—This shrine to Colonial times offers American standards like chicken potpie, baked peasant meatloaf, Indian pudding, and hot mulled wine. The room in the landmark building, dated to 1844, has *three* working fireplaces, and is decorated, in true Laura Ashley fashion, with lace curtains and floral wallpaper. *16 Bank St. (929-4377). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

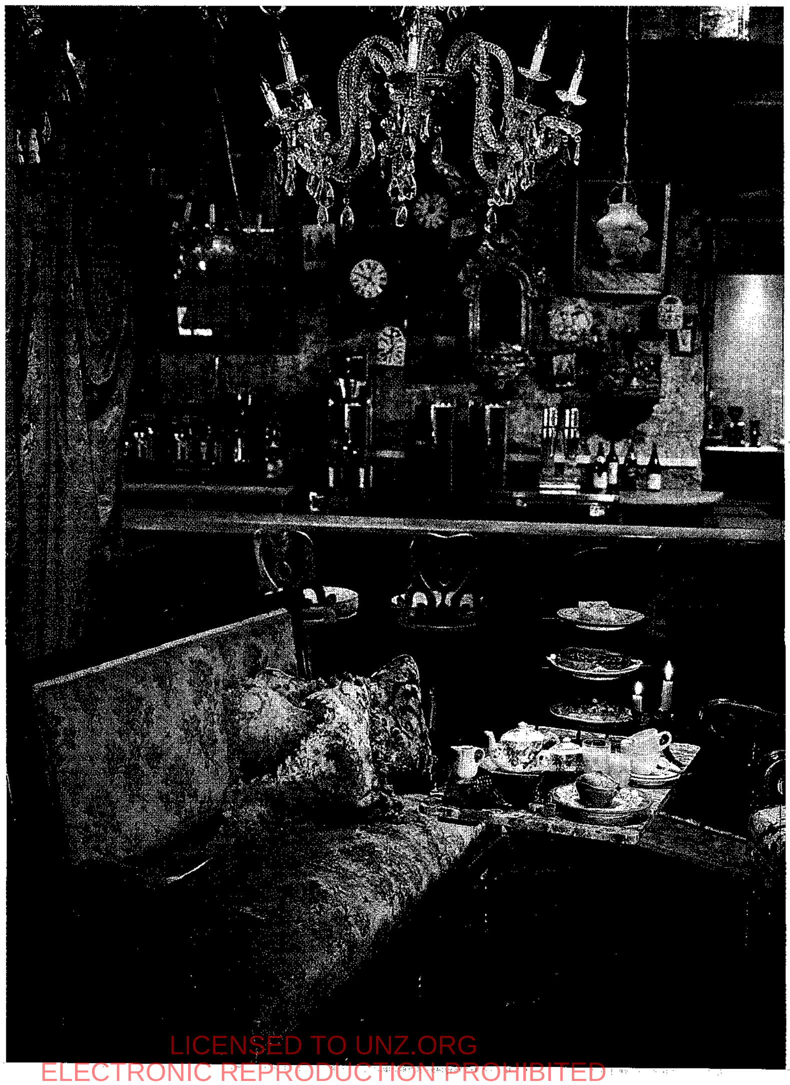
Alva—Bare lightbulbs evoke Thomas Edison, the namesake of this sleek spot invented by Charles Palmer and designer Fernando Saralegui, but the food is all very twentieth-century: crispy shrimp cocktail, cod-and-salmon cakes, veal stew, an exciting cheese course. *36 E. 22nd St. (228-4399). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

An American Place—This venerable midtown spot is to New York as Chez Panisse is to Berkeley. With his eclectic American menu, Larry Forgione made the national cuisine interesting again. *2 Park Ave., at 32nd St. (684-2122). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Back Porch—Ideal spot for Murray Hill residents to meet for drinks alfresco and southwestern-flavored fare. Sit outdoors as long as the weather holds. *488 Third Ave., at 33rd St. (685-3828). (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Opening
Bed, Bath, and Breakfast

ABC Carpet & Home's overstuffed Merchant Ivory aesthetic is particularly manifest in its Parlour Cafe (888 Broadway), where every last varnished tchotchke is for sale, along with dainty snacks. Just the spot to ponder that mosaic-tiled garden bench.



Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

Campagna—The *Late Show With David Letterman* crowd is at one table, Time Warner honchos are at another, and isn't that . . .? Despite the frenzy of having become Media Central, this smart little trattoria serves some of the most satisfying Italian food in Manhattan. Chef Mark Straussman is to thank for dishes like rabbit in polenta, gnocchi with wild mushrooms and truffle oil, and grilled tuna with beets. *24 E. 21st St. (460-0900). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

The Cigar Room at Trumpets—This clubby hotel dining room features hearty American fare like steaks, chops, and seafood, should you feel like eating. The *real* specialty is the menu of 25 cigars from Nat Sherman and Davidoff of Geneva, any of which would be well-paired with a single-malt scotch. Jackets required. *Grand Hyatt New York, Park Ave. at Grand Central Terminal (850-5999). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

El Parador Cafe—Very possibly the oldest Mexican restaurant in New York City, this comfortable, old-world establishment is known for its enormous selection of premium tequilas and traditional dishes like mole poblano, carnitas, and duck with cuipotle glaze. *325 E. 34th St. (679-6812). (M) MC, TM, V.*

i Trulli—A Southern Italian restaurant that aims to prove that tomato sauce is not crucial for survival, i Trulli succeeds with tasty focaccia, homemade sausage, tripe, and venison. In warm weather, the garden is a perfect midtown escape. *122 E. 27th St. (481-7372). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Les Halles—Even though it hasn't been around forever, this utterly perfect re-creation of a Left Bank bistro seems like it has. This is the place to come for onion soup, steak frites, celeri rémoulade, crème caramel—that sort of thing. *411 Park Ave. So., bet. 28th and 29th Sts. (679-4111). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Mesa Grill—Chef Bobby Flay believes in big flavors and big portions. He developed his own signature style, borrowing from the flavors and ingredients of the American Southwest. Loud, stylish, and loads of fun. Great quesadillas. *102 Fifth Ave., nr. 16th St. (807-7400). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Park Bistro—Provençal offerings prepared and served with notable agility in an intimate—sometimes crowded—setting. *414 Park Ave. at 28th St. (689-1360). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Rossini's—Northern Italian fare served in a musical room: a strolling guitarist Mondays through Thursdays, live piano music on Fridays, and a live opera trio on Saturdays. *108 E. 38th St. (683-0135). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Union Square Cafe—The careful service, human-scale dining rooms, and peerless California café cuisine make this one of the best restaurants in the city. *21 E. 16th St. (243-4020). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Water Club—The setting and view from this East River barge is what all the fuss is about. The American fare, from crab cakes to Maine lobsters to Sunday brunch, is fine. *500 E. 30th St. (683-3333). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

Bright Food Shop—A Chelsea luncheonette with an innovative, healthy Mexican menu with Asian influences. Excellent desserts and a great selection of Mexican fruit sodas. *216 Eighth Ave., at 21st St. (243-4433). (I–M) ($).*

Bryant Park Grill—This long-awaited restaurant on the edge of the city's prettiest pocket park has been mobbed from day one. Go at an off-hour for Caesar salad, New York steak, soft-shell crabs, and scallion pancakes. *40th St., between Fifth and Sixth Aves. (840-6500). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Cafe Americanstyle—An ideal rest stop for Lord & Taylor shoppers, whether they're simply grabbing a bite or resting their weary feet for hours. American fare in a simple setting. A welcome respite from the unruly retail throng. *424 Fifth Ave., nr. 39th St. (391-3344). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Da Umberto—Low-key Chelsea façade belies the extraordinary Italian offerings inside. Getting a table is no small task, especially in the evening. This is a Euro–New York crossroads. A mad cacophony of laughter and chatter in Brooklynese and Roman. Don't dress down. *107 W. 17th St. (989-0303). (E) AE only.*

Luma—Luma used to be famous for its nutritional asceticism: no meat, no fat, no fun. Now the only restriction is the chef's efforts to use organic ingredients. Butter, beef, and crème brûlée abound. Enjoy. *200 Ninth Ave., at 22nd St. (633-8033). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Moran's—Charming and timeless New York City tavern that's been around for 38 years. Six fireplaces and comfort food like steak, seafood, and pasta make this a warm and cozy Chelsea haven. *146 Tenth Ave., at 19th St. (627-3032). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

World Yacht—Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—over dinner. The luxury yacht boards at six, and sails from seven until ten. *Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (630-8100). (E) AE, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

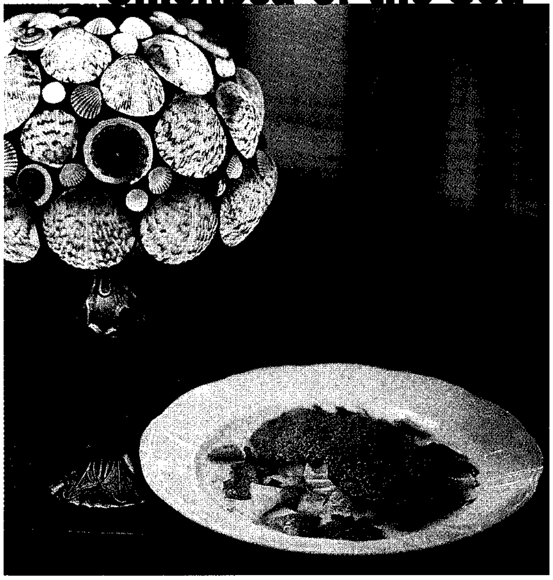
Café Centro—A big, shiny brasserie-cum-café in the lobby of the MetLife Building; there's inventive cooking going on here, and the joint is as fun and good as non-expensive midtown gets. In the loud little Beer Bar, get one of the best hamburgers in town. Closed Sunday. *200 Park Ave., 45th St. at Vanderbilt Ave. (818-1222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Four Seasons—Philip Johnson designed this cathedral of modernity. Picasso did the tapestry. And the place remains a classic 30 years later. The Grill Room is where the term *power lunch* got its start in the seventies. The pool room is where the rest of us go for achingly expensive fare like foie gras and figs and chocolate velvet. *99 E. 52nd St. (754-9494). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Lespinasse—Marie Antoinette, where are you? This ultra-formal dining room in the St. Regis Hotel—think Versailles and you get the rococo drift—is where you'll find Gray Kunz's inventive Franco-Oriental cooking. The $46 prix fixe at lunch is a gentle introduction to exactly what wonders chef Kunz can perform. *2 E. 55th St., in the St. Regis Hotel (753-4500). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Lutèce—The name is still synonymous with dishes like Dover sole, cassoulet, and rack of lamb. After three decades of defining traditional French cuisine, master chef André Soltner ceded the reins to relative innovator Eberhard Müller. The kitchen still astonishes. *249 E. 50th St. (752-2225). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Object of Desire
Chickpea of the Sea



The inspiration for Jeremy Marshall's falafel salmon at his new Aquagrill (210 Spring Street) lies somewhere between his favorite pita pit stop, Mamouns, and Le Cirque, which popularized crusting the oft-overplayed fillet. The chickpea coating is cut with a lemon-and-cilantro-dressed dice of cucumbers and tomatoes.

Meltemi—This East Side Greek restaurant, cheerfully decorated in nautical colors with an Aegean mural, specializes in the kind of fresh charcoal-grilled whole fish that needs little more seasoning than olive oil, lemon juice, and herbs. *905 First Ave., at 51st St. (355-4040). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Morton's of Chicago—This midwestern import has taken Manhattan by storm, winning converts with its tender double porterhouse and men's club charm. Hard to believe it's a chain. *551 Fifth Ave., at 45th St. (972-3315). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Oceana—Fish-savant Rick Moonen's extensive and excellent seafood menu make this room, reminiscent of the dining cabin on an elegant ocean liner, a favorite for business lunches and romantic evenings alike. The new upstairs bar is a perfect retreat for cocktails and seafood snacks in midtown. *55 E. 54th St. (759-5941). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ristorante De Grezia—A midtown spot, popular among the neighborhood's businessmen, serving gourmet Northern Italian cuisine. *231 E. 50th St. (750-5353). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Shinbashi-an—Sophisticated midtown spot for Japanese food, with specialties including tempura, sukiyaki, shabu shabu, and sushi in a sleekly modern setting. Closed Saturday. *141 E. 48th St. (752-0505). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Smith & Wollensky—Carnivores keep this popular steakhouse jumping. All wood and brass, it has the look of a private men's club, the noise of a locker room, and a serious wine cellar. *Third Ave. at 49th St. (753-1530). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Tatou—Gilded-plaster satyrs, bubble-toting cherubs, jazz onstage, and American fare with Continental touches. The dinner crowd comes to rubberneck and dance. *151 E. 50th St. (753-1144). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Tropica—Always packed at lunch, but squeeze in at the bar and order the salmon and a glass of tropical iced tea. The dining room serves the most imaginative seafood in town, but be sure to go on a weekday—the restaurant, located in the lobby of the MetLife Building, is closed Saturday and Sunday. *200 Park Ave., nr. 45th St. (867-6767). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Zarela—A festive Mexican restaurant with a menu that lives up to its margarita-fueled bar scene, Zarela is known for its authentic regional cuisine. Try the red-snapper hash, chipotle-grilled salmon, tequila-braised chicken, and homemade tamales. *953 Second Ave., nr. 50th St. (644-6740). (M–E) AE, DC.*

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

Adrienne—The Art Nouveau elegance and hush make this a perfect spot for an illicit tryst or a business lunch. A United Nations of flavors. *700 Fifth Ave., at 55th St., in the Peninsula. (247-2200). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

American Festival Cafe—Lunch inside this glamorized eatery with rotating American folk art. Skaters in winter and a garden in the summer and early fall make for fierce window-seat competition. Seven hours' free parking after 5:30 P.M. *Rockefeller Plaza, 20 W. 50th St. (332-7620). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Aquavit—An elegant midtown respite for sophisticated Scandinavian food, set in the glass-enclosed atrium of the former Rockefeller mansion. The menu offers delicately flavored Swedish versions of tea-smoked duck, lobster salad, venison, and, of course, gravlax and herring. *13 W. 54th St. (307-7311). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Bello—Locals flock here for generous portions of well-priced Northern Italian served in a casually elegant atmosphere. Free parking from four till closing. *863 Ninth Ave., at 56th St. (246-6773). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Broadway Joe—Located in a townhouse on Restaurant Row, this steakhouse serves a fourteen-ounce prime rib but also delivers fresh seafood and pasta for the omnivore. Hirschfeld caricatures cover the walls, so come find your NINAS while you dine. Free dinner parking. Private parties. *315 W. 46th St. (246-6513). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Cafe Un Deux Trois—Theater District landmark serving French bistro food like steak au poivre, steak tartare, and grilled salmon. *123 W. 44th St. (354-4148). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Century Cafe—Theater-district cafe popular among actors and fans alike, with a prix-fixe menu and American fare like filet mignon and grilled salmon. *132 W. 43rd St. (398-1988). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Ciao Europa—Midtown Italian in an elegant, castle-like setting, with ceiling-high murals painted in 1937. Regulars swear by the pasta and desserts. *63 W. 54th St. (247-1200). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Cité—An extravagant French steakhouse, marble and pewter with blazing chandeliers, and a more affordable grill next door. *120 W. 51st St. (956-7100). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

"44"—Still the first stop for the officers of the Condé Nast empire. Deeply plush, windowless décor feels like the center of the Earth. Given the theatricality, surprisingly terrific food. *44 W. 44th St., in the Royalton (944-8844). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Frankie and Johnnie's Steakhouse—The oldest speakeasy in the city. In the same location in the

Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

theater district since 1926. Try the steaks and the chops. Yes, that was Tom Selleck. *269 W. 45th St. (997-9494). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Judson Grill—Bustling space in midtown office tower with surprisingly inventive American grill food and a bar scene to rival most. *152 W. 52nd St. (582-5252). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Julian's—This casual Mediterranean restaurant doesn't get as frenetic as its sister establishment next door, but it still qualifies as a fun place to dine in Hell's Kitchen. The menu offers grilled swordfish, sautéed chicken breasts with grapes and pine nuts, and a range of Sicilian and Southern Italian specialties. *802 Ninth Ave. (262-4288). (I–M) AE, DS, TM.*

La Bonne Soupe—Checked tablecloths, steak frites, onion soup, and crème caramel to fall in love with. Twenty years ago, long before New Yorkers knew they loved casual French dining, this midtown mainstay set the pace. *48 W. 55th St. (586-7650). (I) AE, MC, V.*

La Côte Basque—Jean-Jacques Rachou's transplanted shrine to French cooking has preserved the Basque murals and the coddled atmosphere of the original location one block east. Modernized, with a menu more "American with a French accent," and Richard Leach in charge of elaborate pastry design, the old-world institution has been successfully reborn. Open Sundays. *60 W. 55th St. (688-6525). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

La Reserve—Justifiably crowded during pre-curtain times; stop by during odd hours for sophisticated French offerings and environs. *4 W. 49th St. (247-2993/299). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Langan's—American cuisine in a clublike setting. Food ranges from steaks to crab cakes and seafood. A trendy, well-heeled crowd at the much-frequented bar mixes with theatergoers in the dining room. *150 W. 47th St. (869-5482). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Lattanzi—Reliable Italian in a romantic garden. Go when there's no danger of a curtain rising or falling soon for special attention. *361 W. 46th St. (315-0980). (M) AE only.*

Le Bernardin—French-born Eric Ripert carries forth the quest of his predecessor, the late Gilbert Le Coze, for the world's most spectacular seafood. His ambitious signature dishes—scallops and foie gras with truffles, Spanish-style mackerel in Jerez vinegar, saddle of monkfish—have already won a very loyal following. *155 W. 51st St. (489-1515). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Martini's—Convenient for pre- and posttheater, with a buzzing year-round sidewalk café and chef Richard Krause's rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and wood-oven pizza. *810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (767-1717). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Patsy's—If it's good enough for Frank, it's good enough for you. Upscale Neapolitan eatery rooted in the glorious fifties. *236 W. 56th St. (247-3491). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Pierre au Tunnel—French the way it used to be (the place is 41 years old), and thoroughly charming, reliable, and comforting. *250 W. 47th St. (575-1220). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Rainbow Room—"Where troubles melt like lemon drops," boasts this perch in the sky. The restaurant is 65 stories up and more than 60 years old, and its stellar views of New York give it reason to gloat. Romantic, with a solid Continental menu. Jacket and tie required. *30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

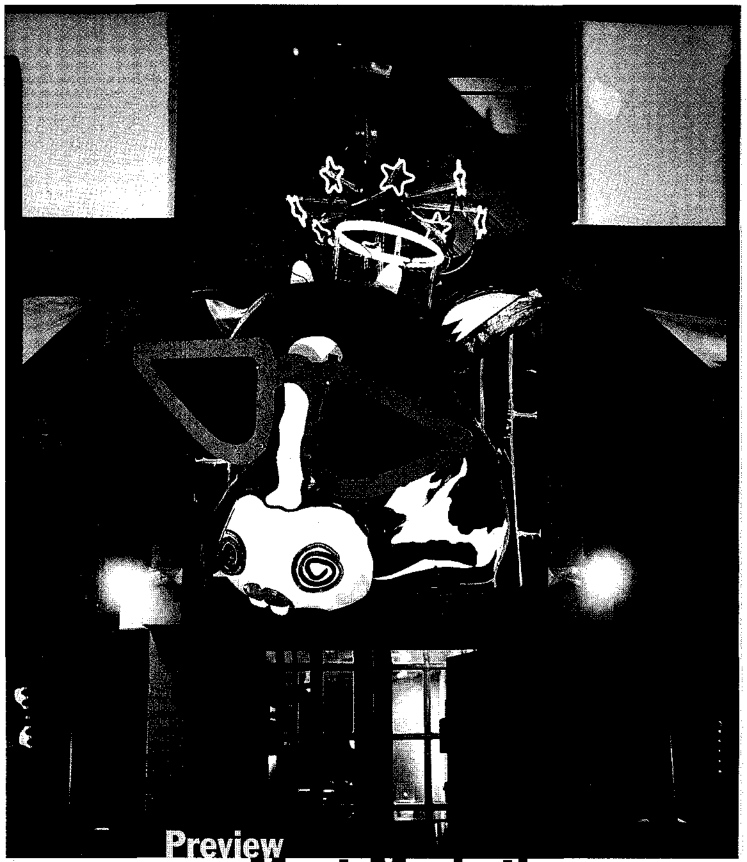
Ruth's Chris Steakhouse—A steak cooked in butter is the centerpiece of this successful upscale chain's take-no-prisoners march east across the country. Steak served in a series of connected, muted, and wood-paneled dining rooms. *148 W. 51st St. (245-9600). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Sea Grill—Plush, cozy dining room open to garden tables in the summer and offers a view of the Rockefeller Center skating rink in winter. The serving team does cartwheels toting crab cakes with two sauces, mint-touched carpaccio of yellowfin-tuna mignon, and swordfish steak at premium prices. *Rockefeller Plaza, 19 W. 49th St. (332-7610). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Shaan—A comprehensive, if voluminous, menu. Northern Indian in a spacious floral dining room in Rockefeller Center. *57 W. 48th St. (977-8400). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Stage Delicatessen—A landmark deli that serves gigantic sandwiches, every one of which is worth returning for. *834 Seventh Ave., nr. 54th St. (245-7850). (I) AE, MC, V.*

'21' Club—The new, old, younger '21' has lost its hauteur at the door but not its toys in the artfully restored saloon. Club classics alongside contemporary whimsy at prices that stagger, but from 10:30, supper is a bargain. *21 W. 52nd St. (582-7200). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*



Preview
Meat Marketing

Oren Stevens's jock hangout Oren & Aretsky predated the much more calculated, theme-park Official All Star by more than a decade. His new Holy Cow—a rough-hewn, russet-colored two-level monument to (mostly) meat, potatoes, and malt-shop desserts—has its share of athlete investors (boxer Shannon Briggs, Ranger Brian Leetch) and wacky-themed paraphernalia, like the sign sculpture (above) by Henri David El Kaim. (250 West 86th Street.)

Photograph by Bernd Auers.

57th–60th Streets

Contrapunto—Join the queue in this good-looking, second-story pastaria for slightly Americanized Italian classics. *200 E. 60th St. (751-8616). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven—The country's entertainment-industry glitterati make themselves right at home at I. M. Pei's monumental dining room. Susan Weaver is one of the only working chefs to combine contemporary presentation and technique with classic Provençal on one plate. The weekend bar scene puts the concept-hotel bar scene to shame. *57 E. 57th St. (758-5700). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Les Célébrités—Plush and old-fashioned, this imposing dining room in the Essex House on Central Park South also happens to have a very fine kitchen. Dinner only. *160 Central Park So. (484-5113). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

The Manhattan Ocean Club—Savor your seafood in an elegant dining room decorated with Picasso ceramics and Brazilian-red-cherry floors. *57 W. 58th St. (371-7777). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

March—This small townhouse feels homey and romantic. Try confit and grilled duck touched with sweet and savory chutneys or Atlantic salmon with Middle Eastern spices and aïoli. *405 E. 58th St. (754-6272). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Motown Cafe—Motor City music, live and memorialized in showbiz displays, keeps the crowds lining up. So do the down-home midtown versions of barbecue, fried chicken, meatloaf, and crab cakes. *104 W. 57th St. (581-8030). (I) AE, MC, V.*

Petrossian—Fast food for the very rich in an Art Deco setting with carved frosted glass, mink-trimmed banquettes, and period bronzes—lean flappers with leaner wolfhounds. *182 W. 58th St. (245-2214). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Rosa Mexicano—Did someone say "fresh-pomegranate margarita"? Yes, someone did. What's more, this spot prepares your guacamole tableside (a south-of-the-border hibachi?). Some of the tastier gourmet Mexican in the city. *1063 First Ave., at 58th St. (753-7407). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

San Domenico—Toques off to owner Tony May, who may have done more for the cause of serious Italian cooking in New York than any other single restaurateur. His dining room is formal, and the food is wonderful. *240 Central Park So. (265-5959). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Serendipity 3—A fun house for grown-ups and kids alike, with a foyer boutique and a wildly eclectic American menu featuring frozen hot chocolate, foot-long hot dogs, and fabulous dessert concoctions. *225 E. 60th St. (838-3531). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Above 60th Street, East Side

Arizona 206—Innovative southwestern, situated amid a cluster of movie theatres, and spitting distance from Bloomingdale's. Adobelike setting with fireplace and active sort-of-singles bar. Ideal spot for a drink or a feast. *206 E. 60th St. (838-0440). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Baraonda—When the rest of the neighborhood is dark, this elegant Northern Italian hot spot is just starting to glow. The Rangers celebrated their Stanley Cup victory here, and yes, that was George Michael. *1439 Second Ave., at 75th St. (288-8555). (M) ($).*

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The Boathouse Cafe—This is a glorious oasis in Central Park where you'll find an array of seasonal specialties like roast rack of lamb, farfalle with spring vegetables, and crabmeat-and-grapefruit salad. *Central Park, nr. 72nd St. and Fifth Ave. (517-2233). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Cafe Crocodile—A French Mediterranean bistro with dishes ranging from Provençal to Moroccan. An intimate, romantic restaurant in a townhouse crowded with flowers and oil paintings. Serious foodies from the neighborhood and the occasional gaggle of well-informed Euro-tourists. *354 E. 74th St. (249-6619). (M) AE.*

Cafe Pierre—The next best thing to room service is this warm, intimate dining room. Serving contemporary French cuisine, this is the perfect elegant spot to enjoy good food and discreet conversation. Dinner dancing, starting at nine Thursday through Saturday. *2 E. 61st St., in the Hotel Pierre (940-8185). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Cafe Word of Mouth—This second-floor perch is a cozy oasis for breakfast, brunch, dinner or tea. The contemporary American menu features updated comfort food like corned-beef hash with eggs, Irish soda bread, and an eclectic array of salads and sandwiches. *1012 Lexington Ave., nr. 72nd St. (249-5351). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

El Pollo—This Peruvian chicken joint has stuck with its simple, minimal menu, to the benefit of this otherwise barren neighborhood. Potatoes come four ways, but you can't miss with the incredible curly fries. *1746 First Ave., nr. 90th St. (996-7810). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Elaine's—Primarily a clubhouse for the city's notables and wannabes. A table here is considered a badge of honor by some. While discussing the issues of the day, try American fare for very busy people. *1703 Second Ave., bet. 88th and 89th Sts. (534-8103). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Hi-Life Restaurant & Lounge—A seamless fusion of a steakhouse and an ocean-liner lounge. The dining room's landscape is speckled with round booths so big and luxurious that they seem structural. This place has two gears: As the evening wears on, the young-moms-with-strollers eatery gives way to an East Side hot spot complete with a sushi bar. *1340 First Ave., at 72nd St. (249-3600). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Hosteria Fiorella—This friendly neighborhood Tuscan trattoria serves especially fine antipasto and seafood, including a filet mignon of tuna and a claypot-roasted salmon, as well as a variety of pastas and thin-crusted pizzas. *1081 Third Ave., nr. 64th St. (838-7570). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

La Granita—A casually elegant two-story trattoria, serving charcoal-grilled fish, meat, and poultry, and thin-crust pizza from a wood-burning oven. Two fireplaces, and a smoking room for lighting up of a more personal nature. *1470 Second Ave., at 77th St. (717-5500). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Le Cirque—In the heady eighties, *haute* fashion, finance, and cuisine collided here. Owner Sirio Maccioni still orchestrates a lively scene, and Sylvain Portay still believes in the magic of foie gras and crème brûlée. *58 E. 65th St. (794-9292). (E) AE, CB, DC.*

Letizia—Upper East Side neighborhood Italian that treats everyone like a local. Try unusual pasta dishes like the half-moon ravioli filled with shrimp and broccoli rabe. *1352 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (517-2244). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Lex—A spot for ladies who lunch, in exactly the right neighborhood. Lots of comfy food like club sandwiches, pot pies, beef stew, and brownies. *133 E. 65th St. (744-2533). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Marti Turkish Restaurant—Kebabs 'R' Us, and the stuffed cabbage is good, too. A dining room that seats 200 people, complete with live music and wandering belly dancers. There is also a "special party room." *1269 First Ave., nr. 68th St. (737-5922). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Nino's—Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. *1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (988-0002). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Park Avenue Cafe—A polished, countrified American café for business lunches and off-duty get-to-know-yous in the evening. Chef David Burke makes the tired catchall "American fare" sing, and

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keeps the *haute* neighbors rapt with signature dishes like rack of lamb and his swordfish chop. *100 E. 63rd St. (644-1900). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Post House—Clubby and comfortable, this handsome dining room specializes in good quality and big portions. The peppery Cajun-style steak is a favorite, especially with a side order of French fries or onion rings. There are dishes with decidedly less cholesterol—poached salmon, say, or lemon chicken—but this isn't a place to watch your waistline. Seriously. *28 E. 63rd St., in the Lowell Hotel (935-2888). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Sign of the Dove—Because the room is lush and romantic, this restaurant has sometimes been overlooked in the pantheon of memorable New York institutions. Right now, chef Andrew D'Amico is among the city's best, turning out eclectic cuisine that draws from influences all over the world. The prix fixe lunch is a good way to test D'Amico's talents. *1110 Third Ave., at 65th St. (861-8080). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Toraya—A Japanese teahouse offering an enticing assortment of confections, green teas, and desserts. *17 E. 71st St. (861-1700). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, West Side

Cafe des Artistes—A smartly run, wonderfully romantic bistro with frolicking nudes on the walls. Open and serving all the time. Stop in before or after a jaunt to Lincoln Center. *1 W. 67th St. (877-3500). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Gabriela's—Real Mexican, promise. Don't come here for bulging burritos, but for fragrant chicken soup, steamed tamales that taste like corn, and tender pork marinated in Seville orange juice and spices. Try the *licuados*, fruit shakes, and the *aguas frescas*, fresh-fruit drinks, to cool off. *685 Amsterdam Ave., at 93rd St. (961-0574). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Hi-Life Bar & Grill—Big-city brasserie with retro feel. During the week, the mahogany French doors, an overstuffed banquette, and the oversize goldfish tanks provide a cozy refuge for the neighborhood. Fine food that ranges from steamed dumplings to strawberry sundaes. After dinner every weekend, a D.J. tilts the place toward a party. *477 Amsterdam Ave., at 83rd St. (787-7199). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Hunan Park—A standard Chinese restaurant on the Upper West Side, but when you have the craving, get your fix here. Yes, that was David Letterman. *235 Columbus Ave., nr. 71st St. (724-4411). Also, Hunan Park Two, 721 Columbus Ave., at 95th St. (222-6511). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Iridium—Amid every restaurant's struggle for uniqueness, this unusual American bistro has found its own. Its award-winning decor has been described as "Dalí Meets Disney" and is based on musical movements. Late-night jazz and Sunday brunch specials make it a welcome complement to Lincoln Center. *44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

La Caridad—Chino-Latino soul food in a neighborhood notoriously devoid of restaurant personality. Mammoth portions, enormous lines. *2199 Broadway, at 78th St. (874-2780). (I) ($).*

Londel's—Food cooked soulfully on a blooming strip off Strivers Row. Live music most nights and velvet rope at the front door create an ambience not often associated with home cooking. Try the smothered pork chops, but be forewarned: Everything's cooked to order—*slow*-cooked to order. *2620 Frederick Douglass Blvd., at 140th St. (234-6114). (I–M) CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

M&G Diner—Dropping-off-the-bone short-rib sandwiches at the counter and low-key comfort. Jukebox is worth scanning. *383 W. 125th St. (864-7326). (I) ($).*

Main Street—This cavernous dining room with a skylit atrium and general-store décor is a great place for large parties (or hungry couples) dining family-style on enormous platters of meat loaf, terrines of macaroni and cheese, and trays of filet mignon au poivre. Bring an appetite. *446 Columbus Ave., nr. 81st St. (873-5025). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Ottoman Cuisine—This offshoot of a restaurant in Istanbul serves authentic Turkish fare like creamy tarama, fresh dolma, savory lamb and chicken kebabs, and lamb shank with eggplant and tomato. *413 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 80th St. (799-6363). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Picholine—Chef Terrance Brennan's French-Mediterranean cuisine is as beautiful to look at as it is delicious to eat. Try the risotto, smoky with tender duck and wild mushrooms, and velvety foie gras with peach coulis, and save room for a glass of port to accompany the amazingly rich and well-chosen cheese course. *35 W. 64th St. (724-8585). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Rain—Tamed for American consumption, the spices at this Upper West Side Thai restaurant are fragrant rather than fiery, but that doesn't detract from the appeal of dishes like pad Thai, prawn salad, and curried beef. *100 W. 82nd St. (501-0776). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Restaurant 222—Cozy and romantic, with the feel of a townhouse. Frank Valenza runs a tight ship at this neighborhood American dinner spot. *222 W. 79th St. (799-0400). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Sarabeth's—This New York institution is a homey place for upscale down-home food like chicken potpie and pancakes. It also offers a children's menu and a mouth-watering bakery counter, with homemade, award-winning jams and preserves. *423 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 80th St. (496-6280). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Tavern on the Green—A must for your country cousin. This mazelike collection of dining rooms, each with a view of the park better than the previous one's, is worth cutting the hansom-cab ride short for. *Central Park at 67th St. (873-3200). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Wells—A talked-about chicken-and-waffle combination. One way or another, this restaurant has been a neighborhood mainstay for nearly 60 years. *2247 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., at 132nd St. (234-0700). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

West 63rd Street Steakhouse—Mahogany tables and red suede walls make this nice-ified steakhouse less stultifying than its midtown brethren. Twenty-foot ceilings allow for a spectacular view of Lincoln Center, and there are seafood and pasta for those who enjoy the company of a meat-eater. *44 W. 63rd St. (246-6363). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Brooklyn

Cucina—A labor of love. Northern Italian in an elegant and very well appointed room. Sensational antipasti. *256 Fifth Ave., nr. Garfield Pl. (718-230-0711). (M) ($).*

Lundy Bros.—A restored Brooklyn landmark serving a wide-ranging menu of fish, pasta, chicken, and steak but specializing in fresh seafood. Don't miss the raw bar or the reconstructed shore dinner. Closed Monday. *1901 Emmons Ave. (718-743-0022). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Peter Luger's—Steak for one, steak for two, steak for four, and creamed spinach. Apply for your own house credit card, or bring cash. *178 Broadway, at Bedford Ave. (718-387-7400). (E) ($).*

The River Cafe—It's always worth crossing the bridge to sit waterside, enchanted by the skyline and a celebration of contemporary American cooking that predates the throng. Outdoor seating in season. *1 Water St. (718-522-5200). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Queens

Stick to Your Ribs—Deservedly heralded as New York's best barbecue, this cozy Queens joint draws fans from much further than across the East River. The barbecued Texas beef is sublime. *5-16 51st Ave., Long Island City (718-937-3030). Also, 433 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 80th St. (501-7897). (I) ($).*

Water's Edge—East River views floor-to-ceiling windows; every table has a view of Manhattan. Quiet and elegant. *44th Dr. at the East River (718-482-0033). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Bronx

Cafe Sevilla—A cozy Spanish restaurant that people travel to from as far away as Yonkers. Try the chicken and rice and the seafood gumbo accompanied by sweet and garlicky plantains. *1209 White Plains Rd., nr. Westchester Ave. (718-792-3367). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Harry's Jerk Center and Restaurant—An authentic island experience; not that polished resort ambience, the dirt-road-in-the-hills thing. *296 E. Gun Hill Rd., at Burke and Wilson Aves. (718-798-4966). (I) ($).*

Tastings
Cod Piece

Once considered mundane, fit for frying and freezing, cod has entered the gourmet realm. Subtle and delicate, cod's white flesh is the perfect blank canvas for creative chefs, rarely fighting with ingredients and standing up to a multicultural range of sauces.

Beth Landman

Restaurant	Dish
Lutèce *249 East 50th Street*	*Applewood-smoked cod with arugula and white-truffle oil* ($38)
Le Bernardin *155 West 51st Street*	*Crusted cod on a vegetable risotto, pot-au-feu bouillon* ($26)
Vong *200 East 54th Street*	*Spiced cod with curried artichokes* ($20)
Arcadia *21 East 62nd Street*	*Roasted cod on a lobster brandade with white asparagus and sweet-pea greens* ($26)
Indigo *142 West 10th Street*	*Roasted Maine cod with couscous, pepperinade, and citrus-balsamic reduction* ($13)
Mesa Grill *102 Fifth Avenue*	*Potato-and-cascabel-crusted cod with a spicy mango-carrot sauce and sautéed spinach* ($22.50)
Borgo Antico *22 East 13th Street*	*Cod stewed with potatoes and artichokes* ($17)

Photograph by Steve Freeman.

the mix

Design Brooklyn '96...Inner Circle Reading

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Radio Highlights

Symphony Hall—3/12: Arne's *Rule Britannia* and Elgar's Violin Concerto in b, Opus 61. 3/13: Wolf's *Penthesilea* and Schubert's Symphony No. 8 in b, D759, *Unfinished*. 3/14: Telemann's Suite for Flute and Strings in a, J. Strauss Sr.'s *Die Vier Temperamente* Waltz, Opus 59 and *Radetzy March*, Opus 228. 3/15: Schubert's *Die Zauberharfe: Overture Anima Eterna, Van Immerseel* and Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4 in G, Opus 58. 3/18: Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Tsar's Bride* and *Sherherazade*, Opus 35. 3/19: Stravinsky's *The Firebird*. 3/20: Berlioz's *Waverley Overture*, Opus 2 and Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3 in c, Opus 37. Weeknights at 8; WQXR, 96.3 FM.

New York Beat—3/15 at 8 P.M.: Jerry Baker, gardening expert. 3/18: Ronald Kessler on his book *The Sins of the Father: Joseph P. Kennedy and the Dynasty He Founded*. 3/19: Leonardo Carcaterra on his book *Sleepers*. WNYC, 820 AM.

Texaco-Metropolitan Opera—3/16 at 1:30: Verdi's *La Forza del Destino*. With Sharon Sweet, Gloria Scalchi, Plácido Domingo, Vladimir Chernov, Bruno Pola, and Roberto Scandiuzzi. James Levine conducts. WQXR, 96.3 FM.

Soundprint—3/11 at 7:30 P.M.: Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder. ABC producer Nick Franklin follows David and others with OCD. WFUV, 90.7 FM.

New York and Company—3/12: Stephen McCauley on his novel *The Man of the House*; Amy Gilman Srebnick on *The Mysterious Death of Mary Rogers*; Jeff Coplon on *Gold Buckle*. 3/13: Etymologist and punster Richard Lederer; John Irving; Jon Robin Baitz on the play *A Fair County*. 3/14: Senior editor for *National Review*, Rick Brookhiser, offers a conservative take on world events; Kathryn Talalay on her book *Composition in Black and White* about the tragic saga of Harlem's bi-racial prodigy; Beth Archer Brombert on *Edouard Manet*; Ken Loach on his movie about the Spanish Civil War, *Land and Freedom*. 3/15: Journalist Howard K. Smith relates the *Events Leading Up to My Death*; Michel Brun and John Keppel talks about the true mission of KAL Flight 007, *Incident at Sakhalin*. 3/18: Lester Thurow talks about how today's economic forces shape tomorrow's world in *The Future of Capitalism*; Mark Rosenthal discusses curating "Abstraction in the Twentieth Century" at the Guggenheim Museum. 3/19: Marilyn Quayle and Nancy Northcott on their novel *The Campaign*; Judy Chicago on *Beyond the Flower*, Martin Gottfried on *George Burns;* Fred Keleman, who directed *Fate*. 3/20: Linda Lavin on singing at Rainbow and Stars; James Beck on his book *Art Restoration*. WNYC, 820 AM.

The Written Word

Lois-Ann Yamanka and Sandra Cisneros—3/12 at 6:30: Yamanka reads from her book *Wild Meat and the Bully Burgers* and Cisneros from her novel *The House on Mango Street*. Rizzoli Bookstore SoHo, 454 West Broadway. Free.

Objects Of Desire—3/13 at 6:30: Ron Nakahara will read *Relic* by Robert Olen Butler; Joan Rubenstein will read *The Violin* by Bernard Gotfryd; Michael Keck will read *Wanting an Orange* by Larry Woiwode; Paul Hecht will read *Flood Show* by Charles Baxter. Symphony Space, 95th St. and Broadway. (864-1414); $16, $11 members.

Mark Leyner, Roxana Robinson, Stephen McCauley—3/13 at 7: Reading respectively from *Tether Balls of Bougainville*, *Asking for Love*, and *The Man of the House*. NightLight Readings/Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. (219-2166); $5.

"If These Walls Could Talk"—3/17 at 1:30 P.M.: Dramatic readings about tenement life by actress Jessica Weglein. Lower East Side Tenement Museum, 90 Orchard St. (431-0233); $6 contribution.

Mark Doty, Donna Masini, Constance Greenleaf—3/18 at 7: Reading at the Theatre for the New City, 155 First Ave., at 10th St. (254-1109); Contribution suggested.

Stanley Crouch and Albert Murray—3/18 at 7: North River Reading Series/Greenwich House Arts, Renee Weiler Concert Hall, 46 Barrow St. (242-4770); $7.

1995 Winners of the National Book Critics Circle Awards—3/18 at 8: This reading celebrates the twentieth anniversary of the National Book Critics Circle Awards. Readers will include Madeleine Blais, Stanley Crouch, Jonathan Harr, John Hockenberry, William Matthews, Carl Phillips, and Robert Polito, among others. Untenberg Poetry Center/92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (415-5760); $12.

Cornelius Eady and Hettie Jones—3/19: Call for time. Prize-winning poet Eady is author of five collections; Jones's oeuvre includes poetry, prose, a memoir, and several award-winning children's books. Medicine Show, 552 W. 53rd St. (262-4216); $5.

Lectures and Panels

Arthur Schlesinger Jr.—3/11 at 6: The two-time Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award winner will lecture on "The Multicultural Debate: Where Are We Now?" Public Education Program/NYPL, Celeste Bartos Forum, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. (930-0571); $7.

Mojdeh Baratloo, Cliff Balch, and Brad Cloepfil—3/14 at 6:30: The Architectural League of New York presents this lecture as part of the "Emerging Voices" series at the Urban Center Galleries. 457 Madison Avenue. (753-1722); $7. Reservations are accepted.

Marian Wright Edelman—3/14 at 8: Part of the forum on contemporary values at the 92nd St. Y., 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100); $15.

Brendan Gill, Eric Nash, Margaret Hall Rogers—3/19 at 7: A celebration of the 150th anniversary of Grace Church, including a discussion of its architectural history and a dramatic reading of its portrayal in literature. Barnes & Noble Union Square, 33 East 17th St. (253-0818); Free.

George Carlin—3/19 at 8: Talking with Joy Behar on the role of humor in their lives and in society at the 92nd St. Y., 92nd St. and Lexington Ave. (996-1100); $18.

Tours

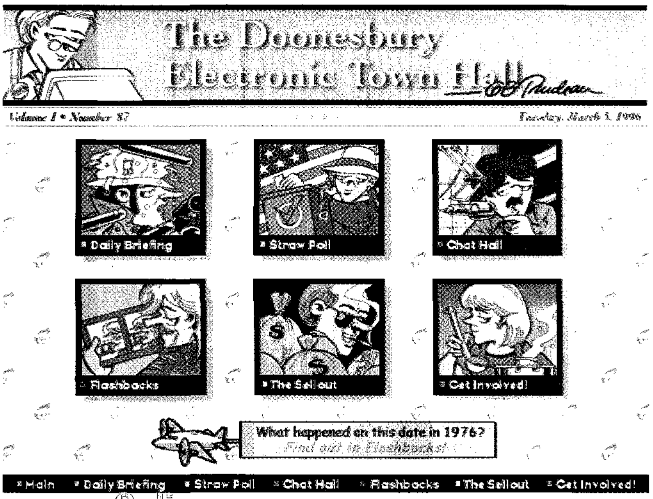
From Emerald Isle to Ellis Island—3/16 at noon: In celebration of St. Patrick's Day, a

On View

Liberty's Price

"Fly to Freedom," a new one-room exhibit at the Museum of Chinese in the Americas (70 Mulberry Street), showcases the paper-folding wizardry of the 'Golden Venture' refugees, detained by the U.S. since their ship ran aground off New York harbor in 1993.

Photographs: top to bottom, Martine Bisagni; Thomas Victor; Jerry Bauer; courtesy of Museum of Chinese in the Americas.



Online

Zonker for President

'Doonesbury Electronic Town Hall' provides daily campaign updates, straw polls of the site's visitors, and an archive of old strips for political wonks in need of a Trudeau fix. http://www.doonesbury.com

guided tour of Castle Clinton and the Ellis Island museum and grounds with a special emphasis on the Irish immigrant experience. $15, $13 students and seniors (includes boat ticket, movie and tour). Call Big Onion Walking Tours at 439-1090 for meeting site and further information.

Irish New York—3/16 at 1: A walking tour through the former Little Ireland district of Lower Manhattan, between Chatham Square and Houston Street. Stops include Old St. Patrick's Cathedral, the founding site of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Al Smith's childhood home, and the former sites of Tammany Hall and the Five Points slum. Call 439-1090 for meeting site and further information. $9, $7 for students and seniors.

A Tribute to Jackie—3/17 at 11 A.M. and 2 P.M.: Two-hour stroll through Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis's neighborhood, past the places she loved and frequented. Meeting place: Fifth Ave. at 91st St., in front of the Cooper-Hewitt Museum. (662-5300). $12.

Governor's Island—3/17 at 1: Cosponsored with MWR Department of the United Coast Guard. Governors Island has over 350 years of fascinating history and is the largest Coast Guard installation in the world. Visit the homes of Ulysses S. Grant and General John J. Pershing; the site of the 1988 Gorbachev-Reagan mini-summit; and two early-nineteenth-century forts. Call 439-1090 for meeting site and further information. $12, $10 for students and seniors.

Fairs and Festivals

New York Flower Show—Through 3/17: The theme of the 1996 flower show is "Broadway in Bloom." Along with its numerous displays of flowers and demonstration gardens, there will be floral design demonstrations and other how-to presentations. The Horticultural Society will offer four free daily lectures at eleven in the morning, and afternoon lectures at 1:30, 3:30, and 5:30. The Coliseum, Broadway and 59th St. (800-553-2121); $12, $10 seniors and students, $6 children 6–12, children under 6, free.

Mystery and Science Fiction Book Fair—3/15–3/16: Murder, mayhem, and madness will be on display when collectors and readers have the opportunity to browse through and buy their favorite, hard-to-find books from American and British antiquarian dealers specializing in mystery, detective and spy fiction, thrillers, science fiction, fantasy, horror, and small-press books. The show will open with a special preview reception on 3/15, from 6 to 10 PM, and will continue on 3/16, from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. Admission to the preview is $10 and Saturday's admission is $5. Metropolitan Book Center, 123 W. 18th St. (at Sixth avenue), fourth floor. Call 463-0200 for further information.

Exhibitions

The Avant-Garde Letterhead—Through 5/8: Letterhead is not (yet) a casualty of progress, but today's formal stationery is memorable generally when someone consequential has scribbled on it. Not so the early-twentieth-century writing paper and ephemera created by modernists such as F. T. Marinetti, Kurt Schwitters, Herbert Bayer, and El Lissitzky. This National Design Museum exhibition is on view at the American Institute of Graphic Arts (*not*, as was indicated in a previous week, at the museum itself, which is temporarily closed). The institute is located at 164 Fifth Avenue. Call 860-6898.

Sports

Monkey Business—March Madness™ is upon us. Or in Billy Packer's case—as the CBS analyst pleaded after complimenting Georgetown's star guard Alan Iverson, an African-American, as a "tough monkey"—temporary insanity. (Didn't Iverson's coach-savior, John Thompson, recently call the player, as a compliment, a "bitch"?) Whatever. There are more important matters at hand, like the wholly televised (on a major network even) extravaganza known as March Madness, or the Road to the Final Four, or the 64-team NCAA Tournament for men's basketball. Coverage begins Thurs., 3/14, at noon and continues, pretty much nonstop, until the championship Mon., 4/1, at 9 P.M. On *CBSssssss*. The women's tournament will be shown from the opening round to the final, pretty much nonstop, on ESPN and ESPN2. First-round coverage begins Sat., 3/16, at 12:30 A.M. (!); the hoopsapalooza concludes with the championship Sun., 3/31, at 6:30. Check local TV listings.

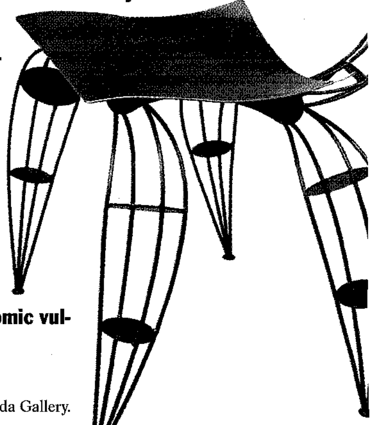
Keeping Up With the Charleses—After last week's bottom-scraping home loss to the Clippers—and the zillionth fourth-quarter collapse of the season—the Knicks were 3–9 since the departure of both Charleses (Smith to San Antonio and Oakley to the injured list), and had gone from challenging for the No. 3 seed in the East to fighting for their playoff lives. Sans Oak, opposing teams have owned the paint, taking unchallenged layups at will and outrebounding the Knicks by 10 to 20 boards a game. Which speaks volumes about the supposedly unquantifiable value of the tri-captain. This week's light schedule should afford coach Don Nelson and John Starks (at 29 no kid) the opportunity to stop acting like babies and head off the coming implosion—before they both take the team down. Wed., 3/13, at Minnesota at 8. Sat., 3/16, vs. Philadelphia at 7:30.

Home Boys—This homestand will very likely determine the Nets' season (and coach Butch Beard's future employment). After the recent quasi-hoopla surrounding New Jersey's surprising *non-stinkiness,* Butch's Unknown Soldiers have been spinning their wheels (ten games below .500 after last week's loss to the 20–37 Mavericks). In order to keep hope alive, they need to

On View

Industrial Strength

For the curators of "Design Brooklyn," the impulse to connect then and now was irresistible. In the late nineteenth century, Faience Manufacturing, Union Porcelain Works, four glassware factories, and George Shiebler's silverworks factory were among the companies operating in Brooklyn. Which helped make the borough a capital of the Five Black Arts (glass, ceramics, cast iron, printing, and petroleum refining) and, in the 1880s, America's fourth-largest industrial city. Today, prominent artisans such as Evan Hughes (furniture), Michael Ayoub (glass), and Bonnie Lynch (ceramics) are based there, and it is their work, and the work of their peers, that "Design Brooklyn" will exhibit at the Rotunda Gallery beginning March 15. "One special link between the past and the present," the curators explain in notes that everywhere emphasize the borough's heritage, "is the work spaces artists are using today. Many of the artisans featured in Design Brooklyn work in warehouse buildings, often located in waterfront communities, that once housed their nineteenth and early-20th century predecessors." That the artists use those spaces because they are affordable, and that they are affordable because the factories have long since departed—taking with them hundreds of thousands of jobs—lends this show considerable poignancy. Its very conception is an insistent reminder of how David Provan's "whimsical modernist statements" and Steven Montgomery's "fanciful teapot in the form of a V-8 engine" are subject to prosaic issues of supply and demand (many of the objects, incidentally, will be up for sale). One notices the beauty and utility of the artisans' work, the literal fragility of some, and—much more so than in most exhibitions—the economic vulnerability of all. ***(33 Clinton Street, Brooklyn)*** **LINDA HALL**



Photograph courtesy of Rotunda Gallery.

Solutions to last week's puzzles

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defend the homecourt against their playoff-contending (and, in the Bulls' case, history-making) opponents this week. Still, the fact that we're even talking *playoffs* and *Nets* is something of an achievement for Beard & Co. Tues., 3/12, vs. Phoenix at 7:30. Thurs., 3/14, vs. Washington at 7:30. Sat., 3/16, vs. Chicago at 7:30. Sun., 3/17, at Boston at 7:30.

The House That Brew Built—There have already been dozens of gushing, exhaustive, nostalgic tributes to the Forum in Montreal, which gives in to the wrecking ball this week after 71 glorious years. But here's one silly little addition for posterity: The place had the best stadium hot dogs I've ever eaten. Grilled, then swaddled in toasted, buttered buns. Let's hope the old-style weiners have a place in the Canadiens' new $230 million home, the Molson Centre. The Rangers play the second game in the new joint; they can be forgiven if they don't miss the Forum, where they won just 55 of 273 games. Maybe the trip to his hometown will finally wake up Luc Robitaille. Rangers vs. Florida Wed., 3/13, at 7:30; at Montreal Sat., 3/16, at 7:30. A playoff round in miniature at the Meadowlands: The Devils take on the two teams they're fighting for a postseason berth. Devils vs. Montreal Wed., 3/13, at 7:30; vs. Tampa Bay Fri., 3/15, at 7:30; at Florida Sun., 3/17, at 6. Islanders silver-lining moment of the week: Saint Patrick's Day in Chicago. Nothing like a green beer to take the edge off a concussion. Islanders at Pittsburgh Sat., 3/16, at 1:30; at Chicago, Sun., 3/17, at 3.

The Rites of Spring (and Offspring)—Sat., 3/16, on East Park Dr. and 97th St., near the North Meadow. At 10 A.M.: the New York Road Runners Club's "Rites of Spring" 10-kilometer race. At 8:30 A.M.: the Junior RRC's "Rites of Offspring" for kids ages 2 to 14. The events go from "Pee Wee Runs" of one block (for 2-year-olds) to "Youth Runs" of one mile (for 7- to 10-year-olds and 11- to 14-year-olds). Call NYRRC at 860-4455 for more info.

Online

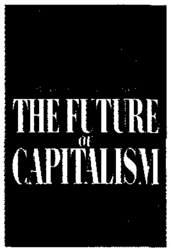
Seven Mary Three Concert—Live from Irving Plaza, hear and see the complete (sold-out) concert over the Internet as it happens with RealAudio technology and downloadable video shots. The concert is slated to start around 9 P.M. *http://www.atlantic-records.com* or *http://www.sonicnet.com*

Dean Koontz—Prolific master of the horror genre will chat about his style and his most recent book, *Intensity*. On Prodigy: 3/11 at 10 P.M.

R.U. Sirius and St. Jude—Join them in a discussion about their new book, *How to Mutuate and Take Over the World*. On CompuServe: 3/11 at 10 P.M.

Phil Hartman—Talk to the star of the NBC series *News Radio*, who is best known as the only reason to have watched *Saturday Night Live* a few years ago. On America Online: 3/12 at 10 P.M.

Douglas Adams—Direct from the edge of the Universe, the author of the cult series *Hitch Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy* will answer all your questions. On Prodigy: 3/13 at 6:30 P.M.



Lester Thurow—Chat with the MIT economist about his new book, *The Future of Capitalism*, in which he discusses tectonic shifts in the economy and the job market, on 3/13 at 9 P.M. in the New York Forum. On CompuServe, *go* NYTALK.

Jeffrey Lyons—Movie reviewer and father talks about his new book, *101 Great Movies for Kids*. Get video recommendations or just chat about the latest kids movies. On CompuServe: 3/14 at 9 :30 P.M.

Italian Lineage?—Dr. Thomas Militello has a database of Italian surnames and their origin. He'll be sharing his information on Prodigy: 3/15 at 10:30 P.M.

Conferences last about one hour. Send suggestions to runnette@emedia.net

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kids

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Children's Events

Bright Lights, Big Top—A human arrow, tightrope walkers, lions, elephants, and clowns perform in **Ringling Bros. and Barnum and Bailey's** self-proclaimed—and seldom-contested—Greatest Show on Earth. Nassau Coliseum, 3/13–3/19; and Madison Square Garden, 3/21–4/28. Ticket prices, regardless of location, are $10 to $35 (307-7171).

Calling All Poets—Kids, currently enrolled in the third through sixth grades should copy their original rhymes, limericks, and *haiku* from the margins of their notebooks and send them in to the **New York Kids Poetry Festival.** New York Kids airs Sundays from 6 to 8 P.M. on **WNYC-FM** 93.9. Submit one poem per child, (limited to one page in length—on the theme of dreams) by 4/26 to New York Kids Poetry Festival, WNYC. 1 Centre St. New York, N.Y. 10007 (669-2615).●

Youth Movement—Forty exceptional young dancers who attend Feld's tuition-free New Ballet School perform in two programs. *Hello Fancy,* 3 *Commedia Dances* and *Sleep Study* is 3/16 at 2, 3/24 at noon, and 3/30 at 2. *The Jig Is Up, Meshugana Dance* is 3/17 at noon, 3/23 at 2, and 3/31 at noon. **Joyce Theater,** 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. (242-0800). $18 for adults, $10 for children.

Theatrical—*Underground Railway, Not a Subway* is a lively puppet show about the abolitionist movement presented by Dr. Schroeder Cherry 3/16 at 1. **Museum of American Folk Art,** 2 Lincoln Sq., Columbus Ave. and 66th St. (595-9533). Free. **Freestyle Repertory Theatre** presents three improvisational formats, not specifically intended for family audiences but suitable for kids. Call for specifics. **John Houseman Studio Theatre,** 450 W. 42nd St (642-8202). $15. J. P. Jarrett, billed as a "singer illusionist," gets the audience to help make ghosts float and bunnies appear out of nowhere in a show called "Altered Reality." Sundays at 12:30 and 3 through 5/26. **Theatre East,** 211 E. 60th St. (838-8528). $12. An elegant Spanish version of *Cinderella,* replete with bullfights and a prince named Pépino, is at the recently renovated **Swedish Cottage Marionette Theater,** mid–Central Park at 81st St. Performances are Tues. through Fri. at 10:30 and noon, and Sats. at noon and 3. Reserve by calling 988-9093; tickets are $5 for adults, $4 for children. A musical version of the same ever-popular story, performed with rod and hand puppets, is presented by the **Papageno Puppet Theater.** Sats. at noon, through 4/27, at the Brownstone School, 128 W. 80th St. (874-3297). Reservations required; $6, free to children under 2. "Feeble Fables or the Princess and the Rock," in which the audience matches wits with the Terrible Tongue Twister Tangler and worse, takes place Sats. through 3/30 at 1; **Here,** 145 Sixth Ave., one block south of Spring St. (647-0202); tickets are $5. **The Puppet Company** presents "Franklin the Wizard," a musical marionette fairy tale hosted by Al E. Gator; 31 Union Sq. W., at 16th St., Loft 2B; Sat. and Sun. at 1 and 3, through 4/28; $7.50. Reserve (741-1646). Magician Shawn O'Toole brings his "Amazing Shawnee" dancing birds and bunnies to **Wings Theatre** Suns. at noon through 3/31; 154 Christopher St. (627-2961); $5. *Schoolhouse Rock Live!* is at the **Lamb's Theatre** Wed. and Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 8 and 10, Sun. at 3; 130 W. 44th St. (239-6200); $20 to $25. *The Spirit of Life,* presented by the **Circle in the Square's** Suitcase Theater, looks at the struggle of the Jewish people during the Holocaust. The program is appropriate for children ages 9 and up. 3/16 at 10 and 3/24 at 11. Kaufman Theatre, 534 W. 42nd St. (307-2709). $10.

Differently Able—A free-ranging panel discussion for parents, sponsored by the Churchill Center, on "Effective Teaching Methods for Children With Learning Problems." 3/18 at 8. Dalton School, 108 E. 89th St. (722-7226) $20. Reserve. ●

"Bunny Hop"—Local heroes Silly Billy, Popeye, and cast members of the Big Apple Circus and Radio City Music Hall's Easter Spectacular join in a spring hoopla benefit for the pediatrics department at Memorial Sloan-Kettering. 3/19 at 7. **FAO Schwarz,** corner of Fifth Ave. and 58th St. (639-7972). $100 for adults, $50 for children. Reserve. ●

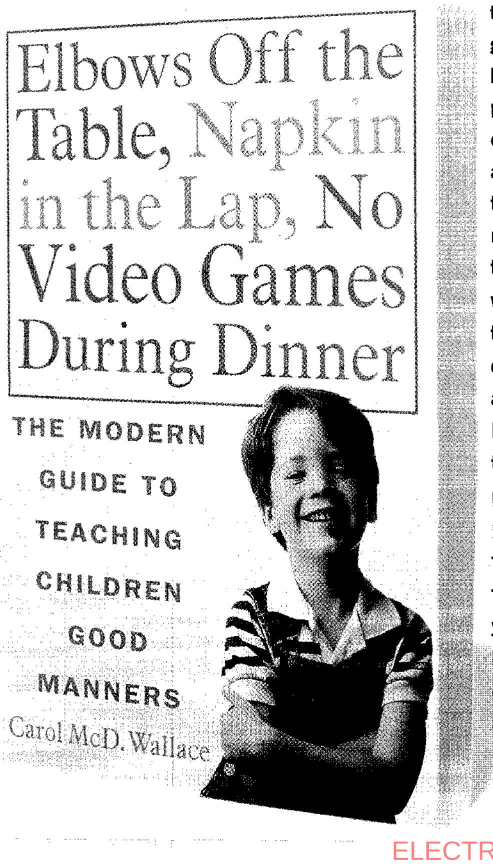
Whodunit?—Joe Constanzo, a fingerprint technician, takes kids' fingerprints and gives a rundown on the role fingerprints have played in solving some notorious murder cases. "Fingerprints of a Murder" is appropriate for children ages 5 to 12 (and their parents). 3/16 at 11. The New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St. (873-3400). Register.●●

Street Smart—Two lively cultural events by and for kids, produced by a partnership of Dancing in the Streets and the Police Athletic League. In "These Feet are Drums," 6- to 13-year-old kids perform a high-energy dance that draws on the African-based music traditions of the Gullah Islands. "Seen and Not Heard" is a video created by teenagers in the South Bronx drawing on narrative materials from their lives and communities. 3/15 at 6. **Ensemble Studio Theatre,** 549 W. 52nd St. (989-6830). Space is limited.●●

In Print
Finding Your Inner Adult

Who wants to be in charge of someone else's manners? Not a lot of today's parents, by the looks of things. Carol McD. Wallace (a co-author of *The Official Preppy Handbook*) has valiantly set out to do something about that. *Elbows Off the Table, Napkin in the Lap, No Video Games During Dinner* (St. Martin's Griffin, $11.95) is Wallace's manifesto of civilized family life. The notion that an etiquette book has to justify the need for manners is perhaps something new. Wallace thinks parents of her baby-boom generation are especially reluctant to lay down the law, "having come of age in an era that made a point of discarding old-fashioned behavior." That, compounded by a reluctance to even admit we *are* adults, makes us as likely to join in the food fight as to stop it. Wallace herself says she has a hard time recognizing she's a full-fledged adult "despite all the evidence—gray hair and mortgage and station wagon." She doesn't demand that her kids jump to their feet when an adult enters the room, but she does insist they look up from the video. Wallace's advice on how to achieve reasonable standards of human conduct from small children on up to teenagers—including tips on tackling conundrums presented by the new social order of shared computers, blended families, and call-waiting—is practical and clear-headed. If on occasion parents find they have to resort to offering cookies to get a 4-year old to clean his plate, Wallace suggests they look on it not as a bribe but as "a positive consequence" of good behavior. Courtesy is so much more comforting than truth.

BARBARA ENSOR


Elbows Off the Table, Napkin in the Lap, No Video Games During Dinner
THE MODERN GUIDE TO TEACHING CHILDREN GOOD MANNERS
Carol McD. Wallace

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Call Chris Lutkin at 212-545-3673 or fax 212-779-2449 to place your ad or for more information.

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What Will Our 1st Date Be Like?—Our 10th date? Caring female social worker, 26, with European flair, has a passion for the ocean, travel and for the fine and simple pleasures of life. Please respond if you're emotionally/financially secure, a nonsmoker fit in body, mind and spirit and looking for a soul mate who mirrors your integrity, patience and flexibility, and who has a zest for all life has to offer. 5724 ✉

Looking To Start Over—Ivy-educated, handsome, successful, nonsmoking Jewish professional, 5'5", fit, 40, with a wry wit and a generous heart, who loves travel, languages, baseball and all things cultural, seeks female soul mate to share romance, fun, family and a life together. 5636 ✉

Share Romance And Magic!—With a communicative MD/leading eye surgeon, dynamic, with diverse interests, warm heart, good looks, tall, very fit, 40, funny - hopes for a best friend/ lover, under 36, 5'6" plus, to share life, family. Phone/photo a must. 5714 ✉

I Want It All—Have it all! Do you? Successful, good-looking, romantic, athletic, passionate, giving, Jewish, divorced male, 6', 175 lbs, 52, seeking woman, 40s, of similar qualities. Recent photo a must. Note and telephone please. 5688 ✉

Beautiful Woman Desired—If you're tired of your job and want to pursue your dream...wealthy, generous, sensitive, romantic man seeking long-term relationship...to your rescue. I'm 36, 5'10" and slender. Looking for a 27-36, 5'3"-5'9", gorgeous woman. Photo a must. 5705 ✉

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Jewish Jersey JD—42, seeks bright, moral, compassionate woman. I am an articulate, intellectual, sensitive, caring, giving, genuinely nice guy, adept at listening and sharing. In many ways, I am a paradox: shy but verbal, family-oriented yet independent, a people lover yet a loner. I am conversant on a large number of subjects, and know myself well through years of therapy. I enjoy reading, spectator sports, games (bridge, Scrabble), concerts, theater, movies. I seek someone to share my passion for life, willing to commit her heart and mind to building a friendship and more. I place high value on communication, sharing of ideas, beliefs and dreams. 5750 ✉ ☎

Brilliant, Loving, Handsome—Wealthy businessman, Ivy degrees, tall East Side mensch, 50 - seeks happy, warm, gentle, cuddly, beautiful, educated, supportive, charming, tactile, upper-class Jewish woman, 30s, to start a family. 5741 ✉

This Is A First For Me—Single white male, 31, very good-looking, athletic, and successful (Wall Street MBA), seeks a woman to share the best in life. I'm not necessarily the button-down type, and consider myself creative and adventurous yet family-oriented. Please be independent, beautiful, fit and a one-of-a-kind catch. If you never thought you'd respond, please do. The worst that can happen is a nice phone conversation. Note/photo. 5715 ✉

Are You Still Normal And Balanced—Despite the singles scene? I still am. I am an attractive, highly energized and passionate man in his 30s, who is athletically built, intellectually graced and highly successful. I think and create beyond my advanced degree, and love to laugh and play as a tender romantic. My intention is to connect with a beautiful and educated woman who is spirited and sensuous, 25-32, Christian, slim and athletic, who believes love, health and having lots of fun are the ingredients to a wonderful life full of abundance. Photo with note. 5753 ✉

Witty, Pretty, Warm, Winning Woman—Wishes for a gentleman of 60ish vintage, who wishes for a very attractive, slender, companionable, confirming partner, interesting and interested, elegant in style *and manner - and a gourmet cook!* 5719 ✉

Alluring, Long-Legged—Jewish woman, 48, seeks tall, fit, passionate, successful Jewish man for mischief and maybe more. 5754 ✉ ☎

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Good-Hearted Man Of Integrity—A romantic, loves kids - adventurous, handsome and fit 46 - in search of female soul mate, 30-42. Note/photo, please. 5713 ✉

Beautiful, Moneyed Christian Lady—MD's widow, Ivy and European-educated, wishes a permanent relationship with a caring, sharing, successful gentleman MD, age 44-56. 5798 ✉

Remember The Day—You saw an attractive woman hurrying on her way and you thought - Hey, I'd like to meet her - but the light changed and she was gone? I regretted having an appointment that day, because I noticed you too... I go back to the street, but you're not there... I am Jewish, 40ish, cuteish, smartish, warmish, Manhattanish, with a list of interests so long that it sometimes surprises me. You probably have a similar profile. Let me know when you'll be on that street again. Full head of hair is not necessary - full heart is. 5737 ✉

Hike With Me—Beautiful, 5'5", early 40s, slim, fit, warm and loving woman with a superior education and a highly successful career in finance, seeks man interested in Beethoven, Picasso and mountain trails. 5668 ✉

Stock Market, Yes - Supermarket, No—Caring, sophisticated, attractive professional, 50-something Jewish widow, who has kept pace (thus far) with a trio of 20-something offspring, seeks warm, educated, witty gentleman, 48-60-something, nonsmoker, to share tennis, skiing, travel, fine dining and old-fashioned romance. Opera optional; dog lover desired. 5642 ✉

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Sailor—Professional Manhattan man, late 50s, will soon meet an independent, sophisticated first mate in her 40s-50s, interested in adventure, warm seas and blue skies, and in celebrating the joy of everything. Are you the one? If you can tell/genoa from mainsail/tie a bowline/ and now and then/steer a boat/I'd like it a lot/if you'd write me a note. 5671 ✉

Beauty And Brains—Tall, slender Jewish professional and mom in early 40s, looking for a committed relationship with a happy, sincere, honest, established man who loves life and would love to meet someone special to share his. 5680 ✉

Sweet, Petite—Lovely brunette, slim, youthful, vivacious - seeks sincere, nonsmoking male, mid 40s-50s. 5704 ✉

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PROGRAM SPONSORED BY NEW YORK MAGAZINE AND NEWS AMERICA 900, 1211 6th., New York, NY 10036. (212)852-7700

New York's Premier Matchmaker

• NOW ALSO ON LONG ISLAND •

As featured on Maury Povich, Montel Williams, ABC, Fox News, Geraldo, Dr. Ruth, Cosmopolitan (Jun '91), and NY Times (Jul '93).

Are you someone special who isn't meeting that special someone? Don't be discouraged. If you are successful, sincere, emotionally mature and ready for a permanent relationship, please consult with me. In the most confidential, personal way, I will introduce you to the someone special you've been looking for.

The traditional ways of meeting someone are gone. Today, quality people prefer to meet through introductions. My clients are extremely attractive, educated, accomplished people. In the most dignified manner, allow me to introduce you to each other. I make meaningful introductions that can lead to long-lasting relationships.

Denise Winston

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It's A Wonderful Life—But it could be better with you: an intelligent, successful, physically fit, nonsmoking gentleman, 60-70. I'm an attractive, divorced, 50ish, petite brunette; work in Westchester and live in NYC. I enjoy both the country and the city. Phone/photo a must. 5703 ✉

Memorable Smile—Complete with dimples. Tall, pretty brunette, 41. Eclectic reader; history buff; art and ballet fan; crossword puzzle junkie; Central Park runner; mediocre cook. Interested in meeting an attractive, thoughtful, intelligent man of comparable age, to share in/add to the above. Note. Thanks. 5720 ✉

Seeking Beautiful Italian Female—Bright, handsome, trim CEO seeks a very special Italian female for a loving relationship. Note/photo. 5802 ✉

Handsome, Successful, Fit—Good buns, secure, comfortable, interesting and interested. Can find humor in the entire human condition - including my own - yet an optimist. You are pretty, warm, intelligent, 30-45. 5732 ✉ ☎

Energized, Happy, Young 50s—Successful white male, educated, good-looking, nice dresser, fits in with most any group. I like vacations, museums, movies, warm weather, dining out, science and shopping. Looking for smart, pretty woman, mid 20s-30s, for long-term relationship and happy days together. Note/photo. POB 664, Valley Stream, NY 11582

Single Lady Wasp—Seeks sincere gent, 46 plus, who enjoys opera, art, theater... Must value honesty, have a sense of fair play. Note/photo/phone. 5747 ✉

Retiring Male CEO—Relocating, seeks FL lady companion, 60 plus. 5657 ✉

If You Don't Take A Chance...—You don't stand a chance. Brainy, sincere, elegant, very attractive (38, 5'7"), very athletic (avid skier, tennis player, runner), cultured Russian/Jewish professional, seeks very intelligent, optimistic, successful gentleman. Honesty, sincerity, kindness and sense of humor are important. 5695 ✉

If All The Lands Were Paper—And all the seas were ink... Professional male with loft in NJ, desires to meet intelligent woman who might recall the first run of Apollo 13 or have the next two lines supra, for conversation, fun, coupling. Note, sketch, phone or hieroglyphic to: 5649 ✉

Beautiful, Accomplished, Cultured—Athletic Jewish professional, pianist and operatic soprano, mother of great boy, 6, seeks sincere, successful, family-oriented professional or businessman, 40s, with loving and generous spirit. Note/photo. 5751 ✉

Golf Partner Sought—International businessman, mid 50s, 6'1", fit, active in sports and business. Seeks lady to travel and play US and world courses. Sense of humor, warmth, affection cements future. Letter and photo a must. 5652 ✉

My Mom Says I'm Great—She thinks her son is very smart, very handsome, principled, fun, romantic, loving, financially secure. Her son is an Oberlin grad, late 20s, NY prep schools, loves books, music, singing, working out, a good life. Desires kind of great and great-looking woman for future. 5670 ✉ ☎

Hot Stock—This tall (6'5"), dark, handsome, 30-year-old Wall Street millionaire seeks a tall, slim, 21-30-year-old, beautiful woman to start a relationship. Photo a must. 5707 ✉

Seeking Depth Of Life And Soul—With an attractive woman, youthful and lithe. Share dining, travel, skiing, classical music, the beauty of the seasons, and videos with pizza. A devoted father and partner at top investment bank, 45, Ivy PhD, attractive and fit. Photo/note. 5676✉

Handsome—Beautiful green eyes, 6', 180 lbs, brown hair, physically fit white male, 41, with varied interests - seeks professional woman, 24-38. Race unimportant. Note/photo/phone. 5673 ✉ ☎

Beautiful Inside And Out—Artist, professional, gentle, very fit - enjoys music, skiing, sailing, children, traveling, mid 40s. Seeking man, 40-55 - must be open, intelligent, fit, compassionate, and have a good sense of humor. Letter/photo. 5743 ✉

Almost Spring—And a fairly young man's fancy turns to...well, you know. Media non-mogul, 35, handsome and what passes for normal here, with many interests, seeks Jewish, pretty woman with personality and slim-to-medium build, to feed spring fever. Photo please. 5729 ✉

Slim And Sexy—39-year-old female, green eyes and brown hair, who has a zest for love, life, family and sports - seeks an athletic male with similar interests. Photo please. 5683 ✉ ☎

Calling All MDs—Blond, bright, long-legged lady, 35, seeks a sincere physician to share her life. 5730 ✉ ☎

Brown-Eyed Gal In Tall, Slim, Sexy—Intelligent body - seeks smart, funny, attractive 33-plus man...for now and forever adventure. Note/photo. 5658 ✉

Come Cuddle With Me—Sensitive, slim, elegant blond, 41, female Brit - loves reading, baking, traveling, movies and snuggling. Looking for financially secure male, 40-50ish, with a sense of self, good nature, integrity and a sense of humor, ready for a committed relationship and family. Single fathers welcome. 5721 ✉

Slim, Seductive, Leggy Lady—Seeks elegant, successful, charming man. I'm 48, 5'8", red hair, blue eyes. You are smart, refined, good-looking and affectionate. Note/photo preferred. 5654 ✉

Beauty And Brains—Multifaceted Manhattan professional seeks same in a unique, upbeat man, 48-58. Letter/phone. 5727 ✉

Jewish Female—30, down-to-earth, fun-loving, great sense of humor and loves animals. Seeks Jewish male, 28-35, for companionship, possible relationship. 5726✉

SEND

A WRITTEN RESPONSE
Here's How:

STRICTLY PERSONALS
New York Magazine, Box # ______
P.O. Box 4600
New York, New York 10163-4600

Swimwear Model—With an Ivy League degree (yes, we do exist!), seeks tall, very handsome, upscale professional guy, 30-40, who's into skiing, windsurfing, hiking, quiet moments and cutting loose. NYC please. Note/photo. 5709 ✉

Be A Part Of It—Very pretty, fit, classy widow, mid 40s, Jewish, nonreligious, smart, witty, with marvelous, fun-loving family, seeks intelligent, professional, family-oriented man, 42-53, who enjoys dining out, sports, good conversation, great coffee...and so much more. 5653 ✉

Looking For The Jolly Green Giant—I am a tall (5'10"), attractive Irish-Catholic mom, 41, with red hair and blue eyes, active, intelligent, emotionally/financially secure, who has not lost her sense of humor in today's world. I have many different interests, with golf being the biggest. I am as comfortable in jeans as I am in a gown. If you are a tall, accomplished gentleman with a sense of humor, who doesn't feel the North Shore of LI is in another country, please respond. Who knows?... You may just get that pot of gold. 5633 ✉ ☎

Way Cool—Single, nonreligious Jewish female, 34, tall, dark and easy on the eyes, seeks all-around great guy. Be warm, funny, smart and nonRepublican. 5639 ✉

Jewish Man's Dream—Sexy professional female seeks mensch, 42-55. 5694 ✉ ☎

Attractive, Professional—25, female, who enjoys biking, working out, travel, dancing and music, seeks male, 25-35, with similar interests. Photo/note. 5728 ✉

Passionate Surgeon—Single Jewish male, 29, 5'9", handsome, successful, Harvard man, pianist, Republican - likes tennis, golf, action movies. Seeks single Jewish female - under 30, dark hair, dark eyes, 5'4" plus, conservative, classy, very shapely, very smart, very kind, and strikingly attractive. Photo. 5718 ✉

Seeking Happily Ever After—Successful professional, Italian-Irish, 44, 6', down-to-earth romantic who loves to travel and have fun - loves dining out as well as dining in. Seeks attractive female for laughter and commitment. Note/photo. 5632✉☎

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Passionate Woman Artist—44, 5'5", shapely and fit, loves animals, nature and travel - seeks cultured, nonsmoking man with humor, integrity and depth. No photocopies. 5682 ✉ ☎

Far East Beauty—Seeks successful, cultured white male, 35-45, for long-term relationship. I'm a woman of wit, humor and charm, who enjoys culinary arts, sports, classical ballet and nature. 5637 ✉

Pretty, White, Mid-40s Lady Poet—Seeks acquaintance of polite, nonsmoking, healthy, sensitive Oriental gentleman who enjoys theater, orchestral performances and poetry! 5723 ✉

Successful, Handsome—White male exec, 27, seeks female life partner. 5699 ✉

Asian Male—36, 5'6", short but strong in body and mind, lawyer, handsome and sincere, seeks an attractive white or Hispanic female for lasting relationship. Photo/note. 5716 ✉

MD Needs Love Treatment—6'2", handsome, 37, without baggage. Not your usual doctor type. Rx requires easygoing female, 27-35, with warm heart and slim, striking good looks, for cure. Need photo. 5712 ✉

Circle This Ad—Single Jewish doctor, 33, 6', 185 lbs, dark hair and blue eyes, seeks a sensitive, sweet, Jewish professional female, 24-30, attractive and physically fit. Note/photo/phone. 5691 ✉

Gay Female—49, comfortably closeted, Lands End type, professionally successful, seeks similar woman for companionship and sharing - loves sports (mostly spectator), fine wines, European travel, laughter, beaches and mountains and meaningful conversation. 5717 ✉

Riddle Me This, Batgirl—Why are New Yorkers too busy to fall in love? If you are intelligent and sexy, and enjoy red roses, holding hands and midnight sweet talk, please send this 5'10", green-eyed Jewish attorney, 33, a brief note and photo. 5678 ✉ ☎

Very Beautiful Medical Student—23, seeks marriage-minded Jewish man. 5692 ✉

Life Is Better Than A Dream—With this lovely, ballerina-like, soft-spoken woman. Stylish, 5'5", wears short skirts, is a Francophile. Makes time for three to four vacations a year. Loves the Met and the Frick. This successful interior designer with no children, seeks an energetic, well-organized, 48-58-year-old man with a delightful sense of humor, who enjoys navigating and is looking for that special person to join his loving family. Thoughtful note and photo, please. 5663 ✉ ☎

Truly Nice Guy—49, muscular and blue-eyed, with trim beard, longs for his female counterpart who is open, honest and communicative (trust is key to a sharing, caring relationship). You should be bright, fit and trim (athletic build a plus), politically moderate/liberal, compassionate, sexy, affectionate, and comfortable with little or no makeup. I love movies, travel, sports, Scrabble, dancing, cuddling and bringing flowers. Though not without fault, I have a big heart with much to give to the right woman. Note (nongeneric)/photo appreciated. 5696 ✉ ☎

The Greek Islands—Would be incomplete without you. Tall, dark and handsome professional seeks an attractive, accomplished but humble lady, 28-35, (MD, writer, JD) for the journey. 5746 ✉

Beautiful, Sexy Brunette—Long hair, great figure, Master's in drama, confident, Jewish, seeks handsome, fit professional, 39-51. Phone/note/photo. 5641 ✉

Westchester Male Needed—If you are tall, smart, humorous - I'm your girl (35, MBA). Good kisser preferred. 5752 ✉

Truly Very Pretty—Tall, slender Jewish female, highly-educated academic, athletic, warm and fun-loving, seeks same in mature Jewish male, 30-45. 5651 ✉ ☎

White Male Exec—Seeks white female who wants to be indulged - quid pro quo. POB 91, Woodmere, NY 11598-0091

Sexy, Fun-Loving—5'7", brown-eyed beauty who loves music, theater, beach, seeks Jewish male, 40s, to share life's adventures. Note/photo, please. 5742 ✉

Mr. Repartee Wants Repartnee-ner—Woman o' wit (who's fit) wished for by man, 37, who is unusual, successful, intense, creative, athletic. Note/photo. 5667 ✉

No Princesses, No Baggage—Tall, strong, handsome, professional, single Jewish male, 34, athletic, adventurous, sharp wit and warm heart - enjoys golf, mountain biking and great workouts. Seeks single Jewish female, fit and firm, down-to-earth, spontaneous, secure, sense of style and humor. 5739 ✉ ☎

Soulful, Sensual—Creative, successful, smart female, 39, slender, seeks handsome, intelligent, accomplished, sophisticated Jewish male, 39-46, for happily ever after. Photo. 5645 ✉

Quench My Desire—Pretty, warmhearted, single Jewish female, NJ resident, 5'4", slim, 32, professional, secure, enjoys various activities. Seeks an attractive, kind, sincere, professional, single Jewish male, nonsmoker, 30-40, 5'8"-6'1", to share a loving life together. Note and photo appreciated - will reciprocate. 5664 ✉

Very Pretty, Slim—NJ professional, great legs, mid 30s, warm and nurturing, seeks single, slim, attractive male MD/DMD/CEO type for monogamous relationship. North NJ preferred. Note/photo. 5733 ✉

Attorney—52, LI, retired, tennis player, seeks Jewish female, 35-50. Nonsmoker. Photo and note. 5684 ✉

Gay Artist/Adventuress Asks:—"Spring is here - why doesn't my heart go dancing?" Sexy, fit woman, quick to laugh and inspire trust - seeks 50-plus, spirited sweetheart. My dream dancer, though slightly tarnished, is educated, traveled and in A-1 working order. Photo. 5648 ✉

Westchester Single Mom—46, sincere, pretty, warm, professional, seeks age-appropriate male who is kind, self-aware, loving and likes children. 5689 ✉

Athletic, Professional NJ Male—Looking for similar gay male with intelligence, creativity, good looks, for romance, art, skiing, hiking, foreign films. 5698 ✉ ☎

Single Dad, (908)—5'10", 180, very honest, caring, sensuous and giving, with traditional values. Born with good looks. My many interests vary with the seasons. I'm seeking a natural, pretty lady, slim yet curvaceous, 33-43, who can share with me the finer things in life. Children welcome. Full photo and note appreciated. 5665 ✉

Works Hard, Plays Easy—Sincere, likable, good-looking Jewish lawyer, 47, prime of his life, 5'8", seeks match. Photo. POB 020618, B'klyn Heights, NY 11202

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Let's Snuggle Our Way To The Top—Very successful, funny writer gal, 35, super-slim brunette beauty, seeks accomplished romantic to reach even greater personal and career heights. Prefer Jewish, tallish and not baldish. Photo and note. 5711 ✉

Warmhearted, Communicative, 34—Blue-eyed, handsome Jewish male, attorney - financially and emotionally secure. Seeking attractive, caring and stable woman, 28-35, for meaningful relationship. Phone/photo. 5669 ✉

Exciting, Vivacious, Attractive—Tall, warmhearted, educated female, 49, seeks accomplished male to love, care for and share life's adventures. 5708 ✉ ☎

Romance At Sixty—Is there a man out there, in his early 60s, who is nice, smart, romantic, young and funny...who wants to meet a sexy woman with the same qualities? 5679 ✉ ☎

Pretty Professor, Arts Writer—48. I am a shapely, genuinely attractive, caring woman, both serious and fun, seeking a warm, good-natured man with probing mind and professional achievements, for a lasting connection. Photo, please. 5674 ✉

Handsome And Cerebral Physician—42, Jewish, 6', 190 lbs, enjoys reading and discussing books, anything Italian, tennis, hiking and theater. Seeks marriage-minded woman with diverse interests, for laughter, sharing and beyond. A thousand words is better than a picture - your choice. 5647 ✉ ☎

You: Jewish MD, Nonreligious, 40s—Me: stunning professional female. 5693 ✉

For The Real Thing—Jewish female, never married, 35, 5'5", slim and curvy, long-haired brunette, a sincere, spiritual, musical, athletic, native Manhattanite, serene yet lively, fund raiser in the Jewish community. Seeks intelligent Jewish male, 5'6" or taller, 32-40, nonsmoker with no children, for the real thing. Send note/photo and phone. 5738 ✉

Ideally—You're a tall, dark-haired, light-eyed, intellectually stimulating, emotionally stable, financially secure, 40-something man with an indefatigable sense of humor, in good shape and available for a relationship with a woman who is equally warm, loving, intelligent and attractive. Healthy and sane variations on the theme are welcome. (Photo appreciated.) 5686 ✉

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Strictly Personals

My Green Eyes—Are the windows to my soul. 39, slim, attractive, successful, emotionally and financially secure Jewish female with beautiful eyes, kind heart, sweet soul, sexy smile and so much more...seeks strong, kind, normal, successful man, 35-50, 5'9" plus, who cherishes integrity, family values, zest for life, a love of animals and kids - and wants (or already has) both. Sense of humor a must. Golf abilities a plus. No smokers. Photo/phone. 5655 ✉

Intellectual, Attractive Black Woman—40-year-old physician would like to meet single male for relationship. Race not a factor. My interests include theater, dance, music. Willing to meet in NYC/LI. 5666✉

Tall, Witty, Attractive—34-year-old Jewish runner, with captivating green eyes, has a variety of interests - seeks similar male, eye color unimportant. 5662 ✉

Salmon Grilled At The Beach—Or garlicky, peppery shrimp and crusty bread in front of a roaring fire - or long-stemmed strawberries and Veuve Clicquot anywhere - Mahler on the stereo, or Miles, or Mick. Your idea of a memorable meal? Are you a man 6' plus, 48-60, very smart and maybe a touch irreverent? Slim, attractive redhead invites your note/call. 5736 ✉☎

Where Algebra Meets Real Life—Suppose X and Y are variables such that X plus Y equals lifelong romance. If X equals 1 (female) (Jewish) (greater than 30, less than 40) (legs squared) (brains cubed), solve for Y. Please show all work. 5745 ✉

Great Legs, Great Mind—Tall, attractive, fit, 30s, Jewish female, looking to match wits and warmth with equally smart, funny, romantic male counterpart, with the proverbial "heart of gold". Note/photo. 5749 ✉

Gregarious Professor—French background - enjoys socializing, NYC, science, photography. Hopes to develop close relationship with bright, attractive woman under 55. Photo. 5634 ✉☎

Charming Jewish Professional—Female, 27, with inner and outer beauty, seeks quality Jewish man, 27-35, 5'11" plus, handsome, ambitious, well-educated, heart of gold. Note/photo. 5710 ✉

I Would Really Like A Mate—White Jewish male, never married, mid 40s, professional, would like to meet a somewhat younger woman with a good heart, who reads the Times, sees value in the arts, can do a calculation or two, and would like to have a garden. Photo and letter for reply. 5677 ✉

You Own A BMW—You enjoy life. You're a tall Jewish man, 40s, smart, successful, generous, outgoing. Please write me a note. I'm bright, beautiful, South American, Jewish, 5'8", and want to meet you. 5702 ✉

Attractive, Hazel-Eyed Brunette—5'2", 108 lbs, 42, Jewish, seeks successful, handsome male. Letter/photo. 5661 ✉☎

Midtown MD—45, 5'10", 185. Interests include the arts, travel, restaurants. Seeks very attractive lady, health oriented. Great legs a plus. Note/photo/phone. 5735 ✉

Lovely On The Outside—Warm and beautiful on the inside. Attractive Jewish female, 37, filled with a wonderful spirit of adventure and a generous heart, seeks soul mate to share magical days and enchanted nights. Interests include both the simple and the sublime: Caribbean nights, late-night double features, cheering the home team, and the challenge of the slopes. Please be smart, passionate and successful, to complement my easy smile and clever wit. Photo/note a must. 5685 ✉

Successful, Wealthy Businessman—Semi-retired, late 50s, tall, attractive, nonsmoking, recently divorced, Jewish European background - enjoys movies, theater, fine dining, world travel, cruises. Seeks tall, attractive, nonsmoking female under 45, for friendship and possible long-term relationship. Note/phone/photo. 5635 ✉

Single Jewish Male—37, 6', 180 lbs, outdoors type - with Master's degree in city planning - would like to meet the special Jewish female to bike, hike, travel, explore NY and share the good and bad times. 5748 ✉

Modern Orthodox—Jewish professional male, divorced, 39. Me: intelligent, loving, passionate. You: slim, attractive, feminine. Us: perfect together. 5706 ✉☎

Liza, 38, Seeks Darcy, 40 Plus—Reading is fundamental to me, a hazel-eyed journalist, as are good conversation, ideas, art, film, computers, nature and humor. Looking for unpretentious Jewish man who welcomes challenge and can keep up his end of dialogue and friendship. Nonsmoker. Note/photo, please. 5672 ✉

Pretty, Elegant, Affluent—Woman seeks doctor/lawyer/CEO, 55-64. 5731 ✉☎

One Good Man—Seeks a few good women (just kidding). Good-hearted, well-educated, with diverse interests - Jewish male, late 40s, (410). Seeks upbeat, spontaneous, tall woman - mid 30s plus, with engaging smile, sexy demeanor, independent yet intimate. If you can find the best in others, like being challenged and inspired, value family and friends, have a good moral compass, and want a committed, loving relationship, please send note/photo/phone. 5659 ✉

Seeking Someone's Favorite Uncle—Tall, slender, blue-eyed blond - an attractive, divorced Jewish female, early 50s. Looking for mature male to share travel, theater, movies and dining out in NYC. Note/photo/phone. 5640 ✉

NYC Doctor—40ish, athletic, good-looking, financially secure, loves to travel and play. Desires sensual, alluring, fit woman, size 4-6, age 20-25, to share romantic moments and more. Photo and note. 5681 ✉

Wanted—A housebroken, been-around-the-block husband/dad. Successful professional mom, Jewish - nonreligious, good sense of humor, bright, evolved and attractive, seeks missing piece of the puzzle (40s-50s). Photo/phone. 5650 ✉☎

Gay, Slim White Male—60, financially secure, attractive, loving, Willem Defoe type - seeks same, 50 plus, to share life's pleasures and commitment. Time's precious, alone a waste. 5675 ✉

STRICTLY PERSONALS COUPON

Use this coupon or call 212-779-7500. Rate is $36.50 per line, two line minimum. Add $35.00 for NYM Box Number.
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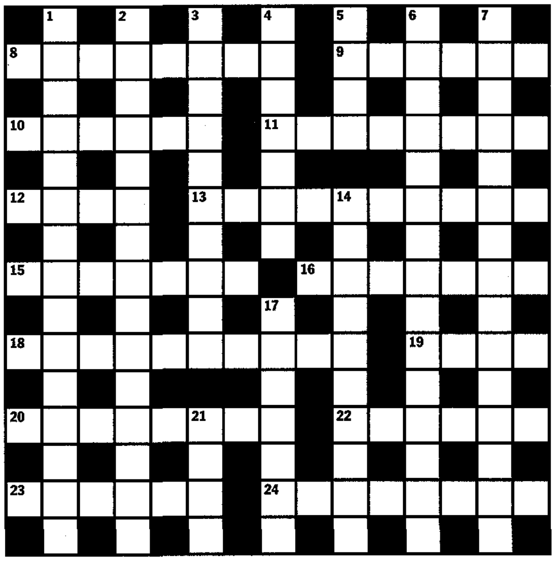
City ---------------------- State ---------------------- Zip ----------
Day Phone (for our records only) --
Payment: Check ---------------------- Master Card /Visa /American Express
Card Number ---------------------- Exp. Date ----------
Signature --

The 'Guardian' Crossword

ACROSS
8 Bird achieves high temperature in dress. (8)
9 Beast with back-plate. (6)
10 Marauder of old in trumped-up role reversal. (6)
11 Generate excitement from unfermented liquor? (5,3)
12 Piercing lamentation. (4)
13 Like 5 without 3, a blend of fresh and stale. (10)
15 What kettles do without lid? Could be scale. (7)
16 Raw deal in colleague is quite wrong. (3,4)
18 Count of hesitations among people. (10)
19 Stay anchored or travel? (4)
20 Quicker way for bowling green? (5,3)
22 Royal tree? Tune which ends near Bromley? (6)
23 Agree with dog. (6)
24 Talk wildly, pursuing some fat nobleman. (8)



DOWN
1 Actor achieving comic effect in dance. (7,8)
2 Actress stirred real men with food full of fat and sugar. (7,8)
3 Actor makes female foolish in rising Scottish town. (5,5)
4 Day for entry to fighting ship. (7)
5 Female for fighting ships. (4)
6 Actor, king on island: my error, possibly. (6,9)
7 Actress gives flying admiral appropriately coloured resting-place. (7,8)
14 Actress to come on stage in length and line. (5,5)
17 Great enemy of those at the top? (3,4)
21 Irish county stopper. (4)

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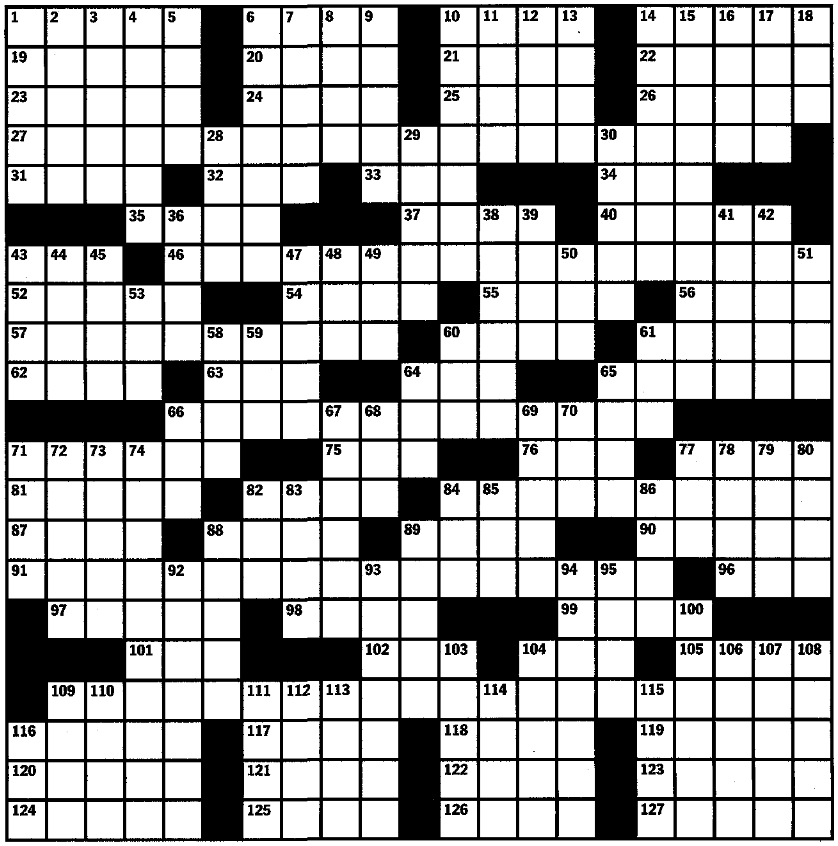
'Timely Riddle': 'Cue' Crossword • By Maura B. Jacobson

ACROSS
1 "Olympia" painter
6 Lobster's appendage
10 Cherry variety
14 City on the Missouri
19 Suppress a syllable
20 Sway with a lei
21 Nabisco cookie
22 Dan of "Laugh-In"
23 Eye nerve
24 Alias for Cupid
25 Onetime Supreme
26 Colonel Tibbets's mother
27 Riddle: I
31 Enclosure with a ticket order: abbr.
32 Juan Carlos's title
33 Alphabet sequence
34 Jet flyer's hangover
35 Oscar —— Renta
37 Fairy-tale meanie
40 This is silly
43 Fat farm
46 Riddle: II
52 Hoglike mammal
54 Needs a doctor
55 Debatable
56 Tributary of 97-Across
57 Disparity in status
60 Wear well
61 "—— Back in Town"
62 Cincinnati team
63 Phone bk. listings
64 Partner of wide
65 Breed of hound
66 Occasion for the riddle
71 Black suit
75 Unconscious
76 Louvre-annex architect
77 "Born Free" lioness
81 On the up-and-up
82 Wire-fence deterrent
84 Certain infielders
87 In a manner like
88 Place for Polly
89 Vinegary
90 "A House —— a Home"
91 Riddle: III
96 Where SHAEF was
97 Paris's river
98 Laugh loudly
99 Chinese secret society
01 Banned pesticide
02 Free of
04 Comport oneself
105 Start of a magician's chant
109 Answer to the riddle
116 Modern Persian
117 Oil, in garages
118 Actress Garr
119 Provence city
120 Drug cops
121 Pub stock
122 Poet's Ireland
123 Seek by digging
124 Melville adventure
125 Waiting-room call
126 Nylon mishap
127 Pittsburgh product

DOWN
1 Cat conversation
2 A, as in Athens
3 Naldi of the silents, et al.
4 Made the copy right
5 Georgia or Cal.
6 Henri's hat
7 Unstrained
8 Lily used in lotions
9 Advises caution
10 New York City division
11 What weightlifters pump
12 Tree residence
13 Gee whiz!
14 Pasta-sauce herb
15 Having one spouse
16 Army no-show
17 Fifty percent
18 One of California's Santas
28 A Guthrie
29 Packs away
30 "Silas Marner" author
36 Face-powder hue
38 Comment
39 Son of Seth
41 Manicurist's interest
42 Follow as a result
43 Begin to wake
44 Glazier's piece
45 Did a takeoff on
47 Mrs. Gorbachev
48 Hold a court session
49 Bridge guru Culbertson
50 Kindergartner
51 Mon., on Tues.
53 Brainpower abbrs.
58 Aardvark's diet
59 Cut off branches
60 Varnish ingredient
61 Impose, as a levy
64 Tailoring problem
65 Load the hook
66 Tennis unit
67 Bullring hero
68 Chafe
69 Good loser
70 "—— Rosenkavalier"
71 Smelting debris
72 Mexican wherewithal
73 Nimble
74 Modest reserve
77 UFO passengers
78 Like a cowhand of song
79 Lady Macbeth's dry-cleaning problem
80 Concerning
82 ——-relief
83 Seaweed derivative
84 French pittance
85 Quonset
86 Billboard
88 Canea is its capital
89 Bit of parsley
92 One way to set up a crate
93 Serious in intent
94 Poison-ivy discomfort
95 Memorandum
100 Top-floor room
103 Is overfond
104 Heart chambers
106 Wallflower's opposite
107 "Superman" star
108 Adams of camera fame
109 Cafeteria tote
110 Traditional instrument of Ireland
111 TV's Hawkeye
112 Hold sway
113 Wild goat
114 Corsage filler
115 Gallivants
116 Savings-acct. entry

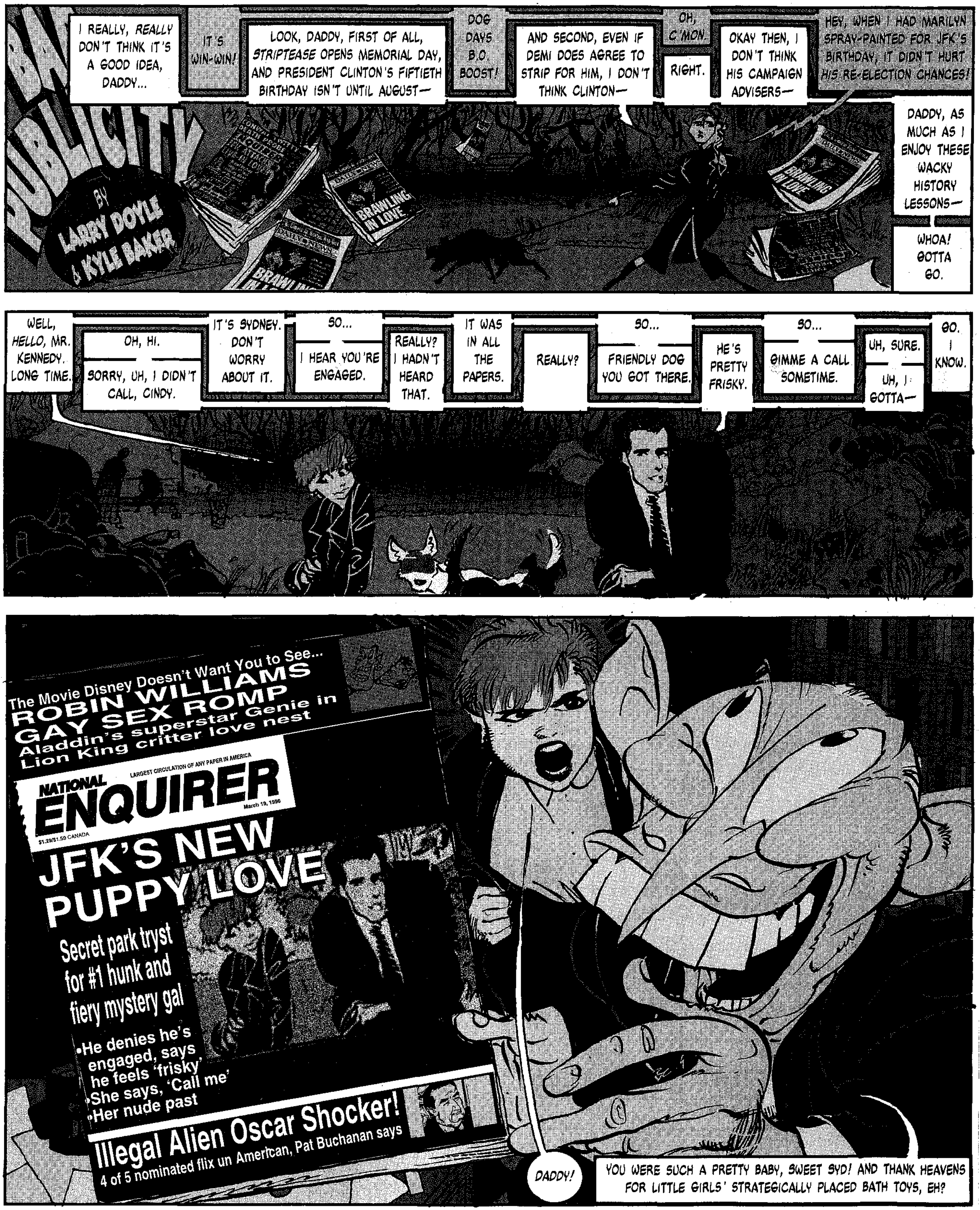


olutions to last week's puzzles appear on page 93.

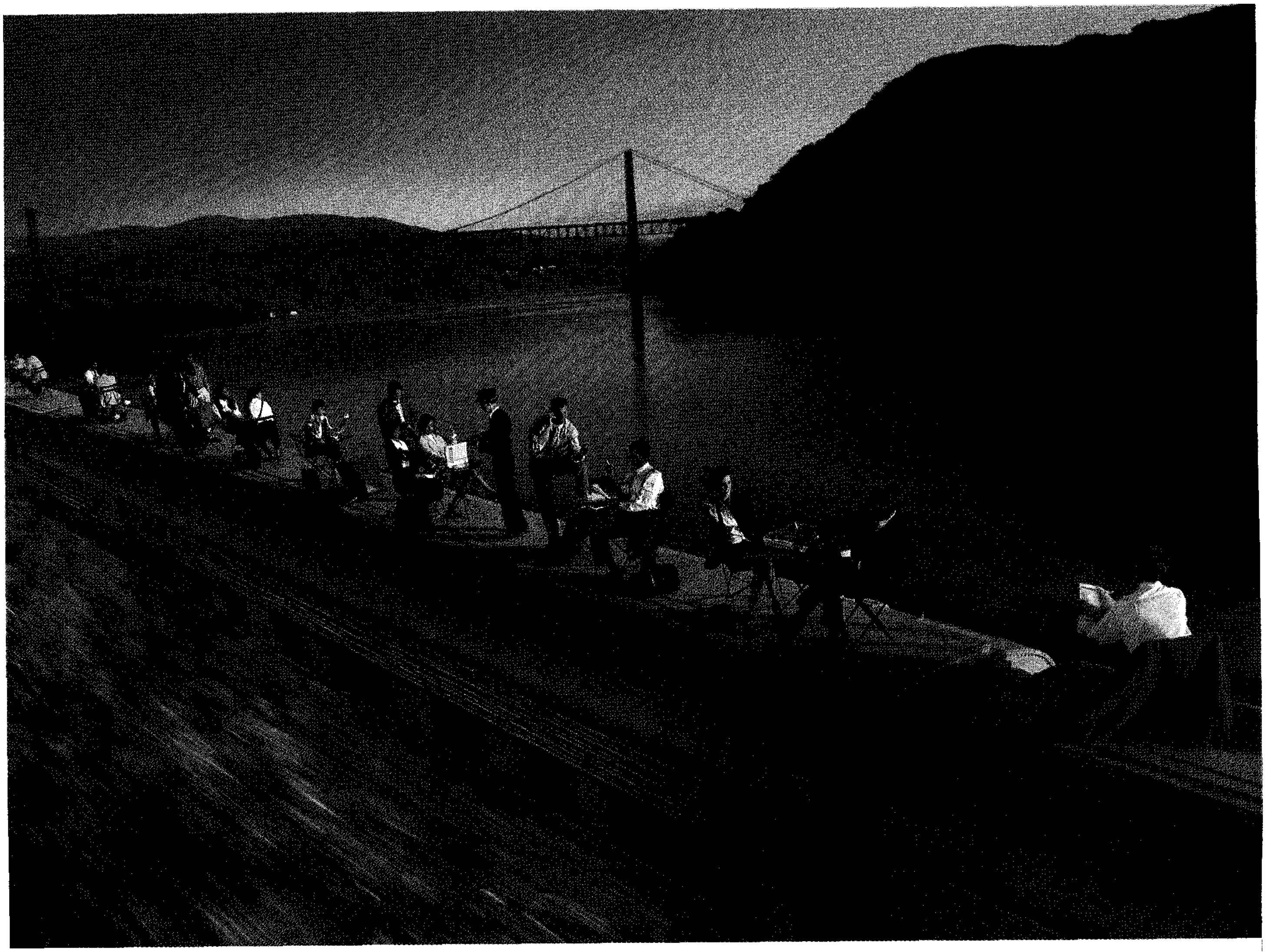
LATE HIT

Snoop Dog

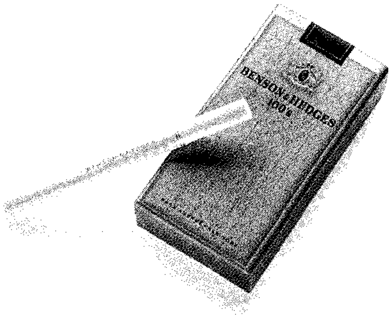
JFK Jr. has a run-in with ex–gal pal Sydney, and the hack pack picks up the scent.


BAD PUBLICITY
BY LARRY DOYLE & KYLE BAKER
I REALLY, REALLY DON'T THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA, DADDY...
IT'S WIN-WIN!
LOOK, DADDY, FIRST OF ALL, STRIPTEASE OPENS MEMORIAL DAY, AND PRESIDENT CLINTON'S FIFTIETH BIRTHDAY ISN'T UNTIL AUGUST—
DOG DAYS B.O. BOOST!
AND SECOND, EVEN IF DEMI DOES AGREE TO STRIP FOR HIM, I DON'T THINK CLINTON—
OH, C'MON.
RIGHT.
OKAY THEN, I DON'T THINK HIS CAMPAIGN ADVISERS—
HEY, WHEN I HAD MARILYN SPRAY-PAINTED FOR JFK'S BIRTHDAY, IT DIDN'T HURT HIS RE-ELECTION CHANCES!
DADDY, AS MUCH AS I ENJOY THESE WACKY HISTORY LESSONS—
WHOA! GOTTA GO.
BRAWLING IN LOVE
WELL, HELLO, MR. KENNEDY. LONG TIME.
OH, HI.
SORRY, UH, I DIDN'T CALL, CINDY.
IT'S SYDNEY. DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
SO...
I HEAR YOU'RE ENGAGED.
REALLY? I HADN'T HEARD THAT.
IT WAS IN ALL THE PAPERS.
REALLY?
SO...
FRIENDLY DOG YOU GOT THERE.
HE'S PRETTY FRISKY.
SO...
GIMME A CALL SOMETIME.
UH, SURE.
UH, I GOTTA—
GO. I KNOW.
The Movie Disney Doesn't Want You to See...
ROBIN WILLIAMS GAY SEX ROMP
Aladdin's superstar Genie in Lion King critter love nest
NATIONAL ENQUIRER
LARGEST CIRCULATION OF ANY PAPER IN AMERICA
March 19, 1996
$1.29/$1.59 CANADA
JFK'S NEW PUPPY LOVE
Secret park tryst for #1 hunk and fiery mystery gal
•He denies he's engaged, says he feels 'frisky'
•She says, 'Call me'
•Her nude past
Illegal Alien Oscar Shocker!
4 of 5 nominated flix un American, Pat Buchanan says
DADDY!
YOU WERE SUCH A PRETTY BABY, SWEET SYD! AND THANK HEAVENS FOR LITTLE GIRLS' STRATEGICALLY PLACED BATH TOYS, EH?

These days, commuters can't climb
aboard with a cigarette.
or Benson & Hedges, travel the scenic route.



BENSON & HEDGES 100's

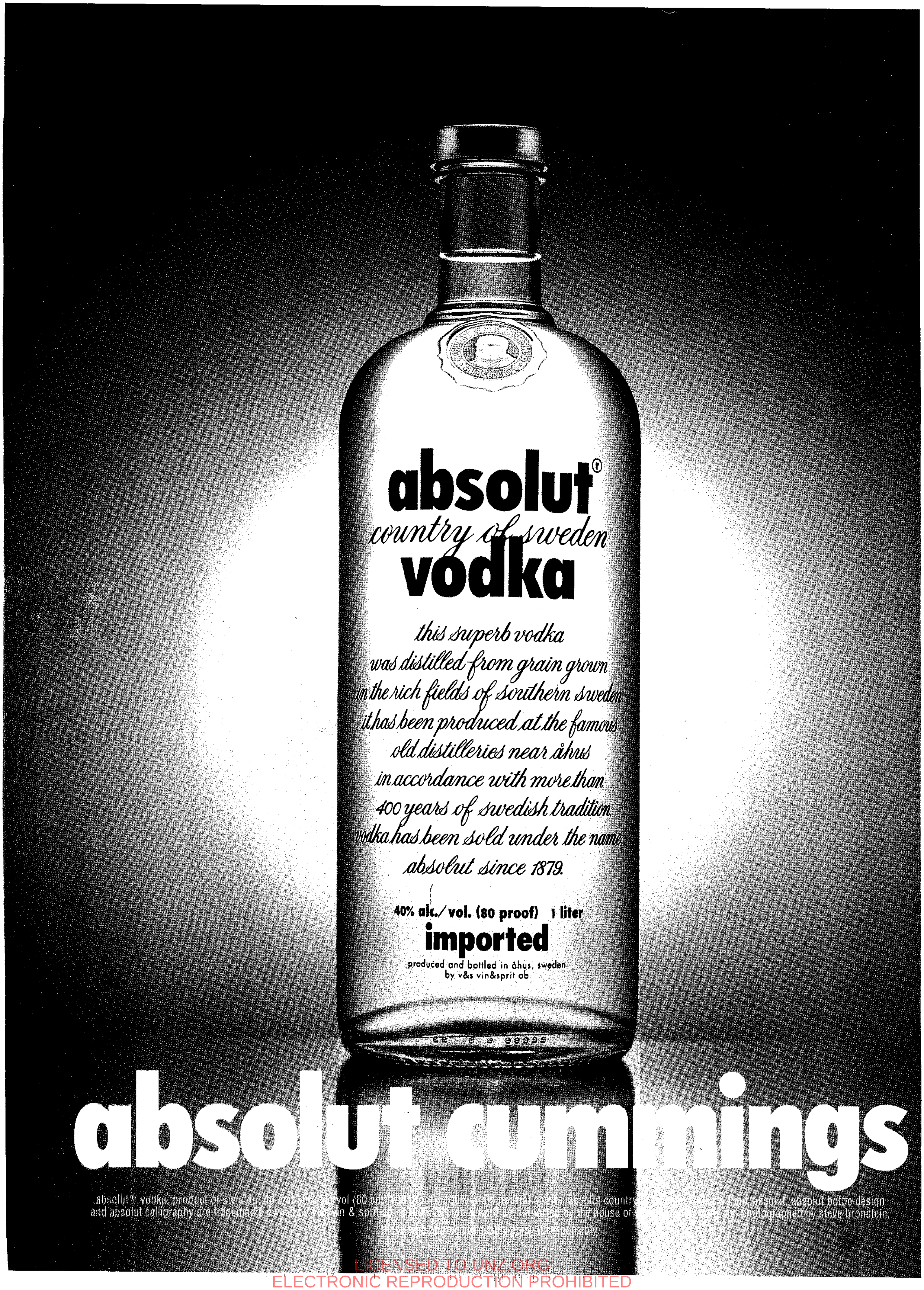


THE LENGTH YOU GO TO FOR PLEASURE

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking By Pregnant Women May Result in Fetal Injury, Premature Birth, And Low Birth Weight.

Finally, a welcome sign for both smokers and nonsmokers.
Call 1-800-494-5444 for more information.

© Philip Morris Inc. 1995
15 mg "tar," 1.1 mg nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.


absolut®
country of sweden
vodka
this superb vodka
was distilled from grain grown
in the rich fields of southern sweden
it has been produced at the famous
old distilleries near åhus
in accordance with more than
400 years of swedish tradition
vodka has been sold under the name
absolut since 1879.
40% alc./vol. (80 proof) 1 liter
imported
produced and bottled in åhus, sweden
by v&s vin&sprit ab
absolut cummings

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